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Ex Ambassador  
and Member of the Royal Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO**

**An abridged version of the original 10 volumes entitled  
The Diplomatic History of the Kingdom of Morocco**

Translated from Arabic by  
M'hammad Benaboud Ph D.

Published by the University Institute  
for Scientific Research, Rabat, 1989

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**“If they seek help from you in the matter of religion then it is your duty to help (them) except against a folk between whom and you there is a treaty”.**

**(The Holy Quran, Translated by Marmeduke  
Pickthal)  
(The Holy Quran, 8,72)**

*“... because God blessed Morocco with a privileged geographical situation and a rich history, this country has a great responsibility.*

*It lies between two enormous bodies of water, and should therefore adopt an Atlantic policy and a policy for the Mediterranean.*

*Morocco is close to Europe and should therefore adopt a policy for its relations with Europe.*

*Morocco lies in the left edge of the African continent, and should consequently adopt a policy for dealing with this continent where it has had a rich history.*

*Morocco is an Arab country and should therefore adopt a special policy with the Arabs, and finally, Morocco is an islamic state and should adopt a still different policy vis à vis the Islamic nations”.*

**(An extract from a speech by His Majesty Hassan II  
dated on Saturday 12 'Qida 1393 A.H.  
8<sup>th</sup> of December 1973)**

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*The diplomatic history of any nation inevitably reflects different dimensions of its progress and well-being. The latter is usually the result of the contacts it pursues with other nations which it influences and which influence it, but this only occurs when its internal conditions are stable. It consequently follows that the development of external relations constitutes a true expression of the internal conditions in each country as well as a means of discovering the historical reality of any nation in the world, whether in its recent or distant past.*

*It is difficult to study the diplomatic history of Morocco, because its treatment differs, for example, from the treatment of historical institutions such as the al-Qarawiyyīn University of Fez. One also faces different problems than one would, for example, when writing the history of a specific traditional city such as Marakesh or Tetuan. However, the greatest difficulty related to the study of Morocco's diplomatic history resides in the fact that it constitutes a history it shared with other nations which enjoyed relations with Morocco whether in Africa, Europe, Asia or America. One also has to study the records of consuls and foreign representatives in Morocco. One example to clarify and illustrate this point is the fact that when the United States tried to establish diplomatic relations with Morocco for the first time, it prepared the way through records and reconnaissance activities. Furthermore, the foreign representatives in Morocco sent their governments reports on the American efforts, the objectives they sought, and on their echo and impact in Moroccan circles. When Morocco recognised the independence of the United States, this had certain repercussions on Morocco's relations with Britain as is reflected, for example, in the British consular reports in Tripoli (Libya). These reports therefore constitute an essential source for studying international relations.*

*Another problem for scholars who specialise in the diplomatic history of the Kingdom of Morocco lies in the fact that those who know Arabic often ignore foreign languages and are therefore incapable of referring to foreign documents, while those who study this subject in a foreign language often know little or no Arabic and are consequently incapable of forming proper judgements. For example, many important Arabic passages and the entire works of important historians like Ibn-Sāhih as-Salā, al-Marrākushī, Ibn-Abū-Zar', Ibn-Khaldūn or al-Qalqashandī have not been mentioned in the bibliographies of many European historians.*

*On the other hand, the foreign sources often include extraordinary information which is not to be found in the Arabic sources. As a result, those who have studied Morocco's relations with Christendom have neglected its relations with*



the Islamic world and with the Mashriq, while those who have studied Morocco's relations with the Middle East have neglected its relations with Christendom.

It is sad to note that those who have treated this subject have often been carried away by their emotions thus diverting from the true objectives of scholarly research, including the attempt to be as objective as is humanly possible. For example, many have written in a way that is considered by others to be subjective and we have come across many such examples which have distorted the truth.

The sources for the diplomatic history of Morocco are both numerous and difficult to study given the great variety that characterises them. They are also distributed among different nations in a way which makes their acquisition difficult. For example, one finds diplomatic sources in different archives in London, Paris, Madrid, Lisbon, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Amsterdam, and Istanbul, among other places. Published sources have to be sought in De Martens, De Mas Latrie, Cajigas, Becker, De Castries, Hautrives, De la Veronne, etc... One has to consult Turkish sources as well as Arabic literary sources which contain some excellent letters written in both prose and verse. Another important source is to be found in the legal treatises and legal verdicts known as *an-nawāzil al-fiqhiyya* which contain the political views of jurists on particular issues : frontier problems, commercial relations between Morocco and other nations, and numerous issues on which the sovereign asked jurists for their legal advice or for their legal verdicts.

The last source of problems lies in the fact that although some sources do exist, they are too scarce to satisfy the modern historian's demands. One may be certain that an oil field exists in a certain place when there are indirect indications, without necessarily having access to the oil. A nation that has existed for more than eleven centuries, and which has consequently witnessed the succession of dozens of sultans is itself a clear indication of the existence of thousands of documents that are still waiting to be studied.

Finally, the diplomatic history of Morocco constitutes such a rich subject, that the question of selection inevitably presents itself. What aspects of the question deserve priority over others ? The numerous dimensions of this subject are all so extraordinarily interesting that I can only limit myself to some at the expense of others. I will therefore attempt to present a comprehensive survey of the different phases of Moroccan history by stressing the diplomatic dimension with the object of evaluating the history of the Kingdom's international relations, and at the same time to bring to light the positive aspects of this history.

The history of Morocco's diplomatic relations is unique not only because of its consistency, continuity and stability, but also because of its cultural features which express themselves throughout this history and which give it a unique mark of originality. One may indeed speak of an original Moroccan school and a specific orientation in the field of Moroccan relations with other nations.

The field of Moroccan international history and its diplomatic history more particularly, involves numerous areas of study. Our field of interest inevitably penetrates the history of dozens of other nations including their official dresses, their

flags, their decorative features, their honourary medals, etc... The apparatus which constitutes the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its general headquarters, its working methods and its relations with foreign diplomatic missions is directly related to our subject. Another related point of interest lies in the efforts deployed by other nations in order to convince Morocco to promote negotiations between conflicting nations and to bring them to terms with each other. One could also add Morocco's assistance to other nations as well as Morocco's relations with other governments in the Maghrib and Morocco's different positions and reactions to different developments in the area. One more aspect of our subject that deserves attention is Morocco's point of view concerning the nomination of ambassadors and the presentation of their credentials, women's role in Moroccan politics or a Moroccan diplomatic biographical dictionary. Another related theme is that of the sultan's umbrella and its symbolic value, or the music and official dress that characterises different official occasions. The question of the bay'a as a pact between the ruler and his subjects is important, but equally significant are the people's traditional political participation and sharing of power through the process of consultation on the one hand, and the ruler's tendency to inform his subjects of the smallest details of matters related to international affairs on the other. The Moroccan policy of toleration vis-à-vis the foreigners residing in Morocco and the general tendency towards a conservative approach to politics as a means of assuring stability have characterised Moroccan history. The important role of the Moroccan 'ulamā' in both politics and society is worth underlining and their verdicts known as al-fatāwī have often played an important role in the development of political and social events. Another interesting point to study is Morocco's position on the question of human rights, its anti-slavery policy and the comments on this policy in European sources. The multi-dimensional character of the objectives set for Moroccan diplomatic missions to achieve is reflected in the following activities : attempting to liberate occupied territories and fortresses, trying to solve frontier disputes involving Morocco and convincing allies of the just character of Morocco's claims, liberating hostages and securing the most desirable conditions for students abroad, signing peaceful treaties, organising honorary missions with the object of expressing greetings, presenting honorary medals, or recovering Arabic manuscripts related to Moroccan history. It is also interesting to examine Moroccan diplomats on an individual basis and it is useful to note their difficulties and successes alike, or their interest in matters associated with the theatre and their attachment to their country and their people. For example, many diplomats wrote their memoirs which reflect their impressions of the different countries they visited and the kind of information which they transmitted to their superiors. Poetry had a tremendous role other than its literary role, and it is thanks to poetry that many diplomatic positions have been recorded and many historical developments described in their smallest details. Poetry also served as a means of arousing public enthusiasm with the object of liberating occupied fortresses or celebrating military victories. Another literary genre which expresses the most sensitive feelings of the Moroccan people or the most intimate

atmosphere in the ruler's court is popular proverbs. Another related subject of interest lies in the style which characterised international agreements and official letters and the great influence of the early Islamic diplomatic traditions on Moroccan diplomacy and its methods which is reflected, for example, in the use of the royal stamp and red wax.

The diplomatic correspondence from the earliest times has been characterised by features of its own such as the use of secret codes and symbols. The study of Moroccan diplomatic history reflects Morocco's commercial activities across the ages and the products it exported and imported. The numerous diplomatic missions exchanged between Morocco and other nations clearly disprove the contention that Morocco has always led a life of isolation, thus being indifferent to developments abroad. It is worth mentioning in this context that Morocco sent many student missions to the Middle East and to Europe and even to the United States and the result was the specialisation of students in different fields. An important aspect of Moroccan diplomatic history lies in the foreign missions to Morocco as well as their official reception at the Royal Court, which constitute a clear expression of the abundance and wealth which have characterised Morocco.

The question of emigrants to Morocco is extremely important because they have enriched this country culturally, politically and economically. This becomes clear when we consider that many scholars and politicians from the Arab world and from Al-Andalus chose Morocco for their new home where they found security and peace. It is therefore interesting to examine the history of eminent figures of foreign origin who contributed greatly to the development of Moroccan history as well as adventurers who travelled in Morocco and others who showed a great attachment to Morocco.

The condition of foreign diplomats in Morocco is interesting to examine because they were given several privileges such as diplomatic immunity and religious freedom, and the Moroccan sultans often intervened to clarify or support the nature of the privileges enjoyed by specific foreign diplomats. Another point of interest lies in the gifts exchanged between the Kingdom of Morocco and other nations and the historical, scientific and social implications of this tradition, as well as other traditions such as the process of twinning different cities as a symbol of creating closer relations between them. The role of language in international treaties and agreements is worth stressing and the Arabic language played an important role as Morocco's official language and was respected by the nations which were tied to Morocco by common interests. Other subjects of interest include the impressions of foreign visitors of social life in Morocco as well as the hydrological legacy and national industry, or the religious and non-religious celebrations and different vocations. Foreign travel accounts have also described Moroccan cooking, and Moroccan perfumes such as rose water or jasmin-water which were made during specific seasons. The subject of Moroccan diplomatic history is related to the defensive military body including the Moroccan fleet and army which constituted an important potential threat which guaranteed the success of diplomatic action. The different Moroccan diplomatic capitals were each



characterised by their own particular features, but they had the same objective of receiving foreign missions, signing international agreements, and organising political activities of different types. The organisation of the *raqqāsīn* or mailmen is quite interesting: it included the transfer of normal and certified mail since the royal decree (*Zahīr*) of 543 A.H/1148 A.D when mailmen started to carry mail across the Moroccan Empire with the greatest speed possible in relatively short periods of time. Morocco made early progress in communications media. Newspapers reached Morocco from abroad and Moroccan news, papers soon developed covering Moroccan society. The question of *bayt al-māl* or state treasury and the Moroccan currency as symbols of Moroccan sovereignty are worth examining and lead us to the details concerning manufacturing paper money and coins. The role of minorities in Morocco is worth stressing. For example, the Jews contributed greatly in the political and diplomatic fields, while the Christians played an important role in Moroccan politics both internally and externally. Finally, the numerous dimensions of Moroccan diplomatic history are exciting to examine if only because they are likely to help us form a clearer picture of our past and will most certainly contribute positively in filling an important gap which other studies have neglected, particularly where Morocco's relations with other nations are concerned. The different aspects of Moroccan history are both complex and numerous, but the main purpose for mentioning such a mosaic of themes resides in our intention to bring out the complexity and interest of the subject which we chose to study more clearly.

### **The Originality of Morocco's Contribution to International Relations**

- Pre-Islamic History of the Maghrib
- Relations With the Orient
- The Creation of the Idrīsid State in Morocco
- The Struggle Between the Faṭīmis and the Banū Umayya over Morocco.



### Moroccan Neglect of International History

History has always been a crossroad where researchers of different specializations meet. We therefore find those who are interested in the political, social economic, religious or cultural progress of nations. Hence the urgent need for acquiring more historical knowledge and the equally urgent need of blaming those who have not left us with documents or histories related to our past. This need has been expressed by many Moroccan historians in the past who have complained of this gap since the sixth century A.H. of whom 'Abd-al-Mālik al-Marrākushī is one example.

If I have felt rather disappointed when writing the history of Morocco at the internal level, I felt even worse when treating Morocco's external relations, because of the absence of classified official archives and also because Moroccan authors discussed their country's relations with other nations as if they were committing a sin, or a grave fault.

Consequently, when examining the period of the Idrīsids, I was confronted with limited sources of information, but when studying the period between the Idrīsids and the establishment of the Almoravid Empire, the problems increased not only because the kind of material available is vague and imprecise, but also because information on Morocco's relations with its neighbours during this period consists mainly of indirect references. This cloudy information in the sources only evaporates with the appearance of the Murābitūn and the extension of their empire to include the European coasts, followed by the Muwahhidūn and the Banū Marīn. Yet the information on these periods will remain limited if the historian relies exclusively on the Arabic sources. The Wattāsī period between the reign of the Banū Marīn and that of the Sa'diyyūn is also extremely difficult to study given the scarcity of sources and the historian finds many profound gaps which he is incapable of filling. For example it is often difficult to examine the general situation following the succession of a new sultan. New sultans were often young, inexperienced and incapable of imposing their rule as successfully as their predecessors. This led to disturbances and period of instability.

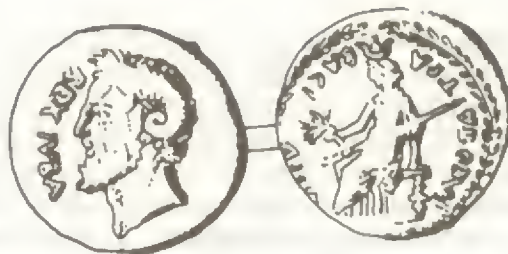
### The Originality of Morocco's Contribution to International Relations

The origin of Morocco's international relations goes back to the period before Jesus Christ. In effect, it is well known among historians that tribal coalitions were formed in the Maghrib during this period and that they developed relations with those who visited them from the West and from the North. It is equally well established that these tribes had close relations with each other.

### Pre-Islamic History of the Maghrib.

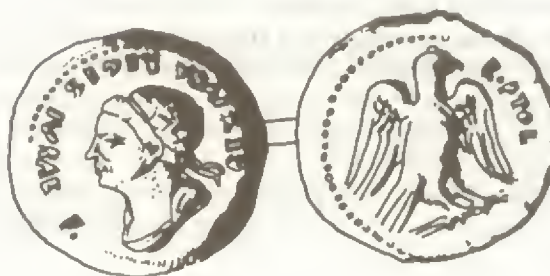
Morocco's originality and authenticity as an experienced nation are clearly reflected in its external relations. There is evidence of immigration to Morocco from the East, the North and the South, and even the West, from across the Atlantic Ocean. It is also reflected in the negotiations with the indigenous populations and the agreements concerning the exploitation of land, and in the revolt of the local inhabitants against the Carthaginians who had alienated the local inhabitants and repressed them forcing the Maghribis to offer them taxes. Different political parties existed even before the third Greek war such as the Roman party, the Democratic party and the Numidian party. There is also the question of the African leaders who were asked to assist the Carthaginians against the Greek presence in Sicily and the treaty between the Moroccan leaders and Hannon. The links between the military and naval history of Carthage was largely the product of Moroccan assistance. When Rome decided to transfer its wars with Carthage to Africa, the African leaders greatly benefited from the latter's problems with Rome and took advantage of these developments to recover their autonomy in spite of the repression organised by Amilcar and Asdar Baal. The Moroccan principalities were equally important in this context and included the following tribes: Maurs, Massyles, Maressyles and Banū Māsīl, and their relations with Carthage as well as their inter-relationship. Other interesting related questions include the frontier issues between the Barghwāta tribes and Bochar and Rome's triumph over the Moroccans and how it perturbed the democratic process that had developed in the Maghrib and how it affected the ruler's functions, as well as the representative system which constituted the basis of political institutions, and other elements of the *shūra* and *majlis al-jamā'a* (representative body) and its different guests, signing treaties, declaring wars, organising the army, the horsemen, the mercenaries, the police, and the auxiliary forces, the elephants, the fleet for combatting pirates and the imposition of law and order, imposing taxes and drafting laws.

The questions that we will examine go back as early as the treaty of 202 B.C. which gave Massinissa the right to combat Carthage and to choose a new capital for himself building a palace in which he received ambassadors, and Greek artists. Bocchus' mission to Rome in the year 111 B.C., the military expe-



*Juba II*

*Cleopatra*



*Juba II*

*The Eagle*



*The Crocodile*

*Juba II – Cleopatra – Juba II – The Eagle – The Crocodile*

*Following Morocco's unity with Egypt through marriage, Moroccan coins took the following three forms :1) Juba II on one side and his wife Princess Cleopatra on the other. 2) Juba II on one side and an eagle on the other. 3) Juba II on one side and a crocodile on the other.*



ditions of King Bogud (d. 31 B.C) against the Ethiopians who tried to conquer some strategic areas along the Atlantic coast to the south of the kingdoms which fell under his jurisdiction, Jugurtha, who was among the most eminent kings who followed his grandfather King Massinissa's orientation by unifying Morocco and establishing a solid state going as far as sacrificing his throne in order to reject the conditions which the Roman authorities tried to impose on him.

Another subject of interest includes Juba II's relations with Spain, Italy and Gaul and his important marriage to Princess Cleopatra of Egypt in 29 B.C. which led to Morocco's influence by Egypt as is reflected for example in the Moroccan coins bearing eagles and crocodiles and in Juba II's invitation of Egyptian and Greek scholars to his court. Some leaders who were contemporary figures of Jugurtha have been mentioned in the annals of the history of nations which contacted Morocco prior to the Islamic period. Other interesting subjects include that of the spoken and written languages in Africa, the Moroccan civilisation which constituted a blend between other civilisations and cultures such as the Greek, Roman, Phœnician and even Persian cultures, the commercial links between Morocco and countries overseas, Morocco's exportation of ivory and different kinds of leather and agricultural products to Europe. Moroccan animals participated in processions in Rome creating much curiosity and interest among the public.

#### **Relations with the Orient.**

Historical sources indicate that it was the Moroccans who first searched for the orientals when they went to the Arabian peninsula where they met Prophet Muhammad during his early period. The arrival of the Arabs in the Maghrib was an opportunity for them to spread the idea of the Islamic state in this area as well as to create new relations. Relations between the Arabs of the tribe of Qays and the Berbers of the Zanata tribes date back to the year 80 A.H/700 A.D. during the period of Hassān Ibn-an-Nu'mān. Of the greatest importance in this context is the crossing the of the Strait of Gibraltar to Spain under the leadership of the illustrious Moroccan hero, Tāriq Ibn-Ziyād, which led to the first treaty ever signed in the Islamic Occident between the Mulsims and the Christians dated in Rajab 94 A.H/April 713.

#### **The Creation of the Idrīsīd State in Morocco.**

The establishment of the young Idrīsīd state in Morocco led its rulers to think of creating new ties with the neighbouring and distant kingdoms. Consequently, besides sending envoys abroad, the Idrīsīds created ties with the neighbouring emirates including the following : the Banū Sālih emirate, the emirate of Banū 'Isām northwards, the emirate of Banū Madrār southwards and the emirate

of Banu Rustum eastwards. Following the occupation of Tlemsan by the Idrisids, the territories of Morocco were «locked up» to use al-Idrisi's expression, and only the Barghawata kingdom was left which the Idrisids planned to occupy.

I am certain that had it not been for that evil conspiracy by some of Harūn Al-Rashid's advisors which led to the murder of Imam Idris I, Moroccan diplomacy would have been in Baghdad since that time, and Morocco's diplomatic history would have been altered fundamentally. It is also important to remember in this context the important number of thinkers, intellectuals and political figures who immigrated to Morocco from Persia, Iraq, Qayrawan and al-Andalus in order to join the Imam Idris thus bringing a variety of cultural and intellectual backgrounds with them which enriched Morocco in various respects.

#### **The Struggle Between the Fātimīs and the Banū Umayya over Morocco.**

This period is among the most difficult periods to study because, on the surface, it appears that the conflict is over the establishment of fortresses in Morocco, but upon a deeper analysis, it becomes clear that the real objective of this conflict was to spread the Shī'a doctrine in Morocco at the expense of the Mālikī rite of law. This led the Banū Umayya rulers of al-Andalus to react instantly by occupying strategic points in Morocco thus ending their previous policy of simply supervising the movement of the Fātimīs, including the Shī'a elements from across the Strait. It was also during this period that Moroccans participated in the defense of the *Ka'ba* against the attack of the *Qarāmita* despite the enormous distance separating Morocco and the Arabian peninsula.

These developments led the Moroccan leaders to be active at the international level and there are numerous examples illustrating the efforts they exerted in order to benefit from the struggle between the two neighbouring nations. We consequently find information on dozens of missions and hundreds of letters exchanged between the Moroccan princes and the caliphs of Cordoba in such sources as Ibn-Hayyān's works. We have similar evidence for the fiery contacts and negotiations between the Moroccan leaders and the Fātimī sultans, particularly al-Mu'iz li-Dīn Allah<sup>(1)</sup>.

(1) Dr. 'Abd-Al-Hādī Tāzī, *Al-Maghribiyya Al-Andalusiyya min khilāl Al-Muqtabas li Ibn Hayyān* in *Al-Manāhil*, n° 29, March, 1984.





ادريس بن عبد الله سلام الله عليه في رسالة الى اهل مصر اذ يقول  
 بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم اما بعد فالحمد لله رب العالمين لا شريك له  
 المحي القيوم والسلم على جميع المرسلين وعلى آبائهم وامهاتهم اجمعين  
 ايها الناس ان الله بعث نبيه محمدا صلى الله عليه وسلم بالنبوة وحضه  
 بالرسالة وحباه بالوحي فصدع بامر الله وابنت حجته واظهر دعوته  
 وان الله جل ثناؤه حصنا بولاية وجعل فينا ميراثة ووعده فينا وعدا  
 سعى له به فقبضه اليه محمودا لا حجة لاحد على الله ولا على رسوله  
 صلى الله عليه وسلم فقله الحجة الباطنة فلو شاء لهداكم اجمعين فخلقه الله جل  
 ثناؤه باحسن الخلقة فعدانا بنعمته صفارا واكر منا بطاعته كبارا و  
 جعلنا الدماء الى العدل القامثن بالقسط الجائين للظلم ولم نزل اذ وقع  
 الجور طرفة عين من نصمنا امتنا والدما الى سبيل ربنا جل ثناؤه فكان  
 مما خلفته امته فينا ان سفكوا دماءنا فاشهكوا حرم مننا وابتلوا صغيرنا  
 وقتلوا اكبرنا واشكوا مسانا وحملونا على الخشب ونها دواؤنا على  
 الاطباء فلم يكل ولم تضعف بل نرى ذلك تخفة من ربنا جل ثناؤه وكرامة  
 اكر منا بها فمضت بذلك الدهور واستمكت عليه الامور ورزى منا  
 عليه الصغير وهرم عليه الكبير في كلام طويل ذكره عليه السلام

This is a letter from the Imām Idrīs al-Akbar (the Great) to the inhabitants of  
 Egypt prior to his murder by agents of Harūn al-Rashīd in which he asked them  
 to support him.

### **The Murābitūn and their State**

- Relations With Ghāna
- Relations With Al-Andalus
- Relations With the Republics of the Mediterranean Sea
- Relations With the Caliphate of Baghdad.

The rise of the Almoravid dynasty and the establishment of their powerful state gave Morocco an opportunity to impose itself with brilliance at the African and European levels. The new circumstances also allowed Morocco to send its representatives to the court of the 'Abbāsī rulers in the Middle East despite their participation in the plot to murder the Imām Idrīs.

#### **Relations with Ghāna**

Morocco's relations were equally close with the powerful Empire of Ghana with its numerous kingdoms and principalities later constituting a crucial and fervent defender of Islām in Morocco and other parts of Africa. The name of Abū-Bakr Ibn 'Umar, commander of the Almoravid army became renowned in that area of Western Africa and is still mentioned to this day. It is highly probable that the number of diplomatic missions to this area was great and equally probable is the continuous correspondence of this area with Morocco.

#### **Relations with al-Andalus.**

We also find Morocco looking northwards during this period when it responded favourably to the appeal of missions sent by the party kings of al-Andalus when their very existence was threatened by Alfonso VI of Leon and Castile. Consequently, following al-Mu'tamid Ibn 'Abbād of Seville's humiliation by Alfonso VI's ambassador, Yūsuf Ibn 'Tāshafīn crossed the Strait of Gibraltar accompanied by his army which was commanded by the commander in chief, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muhammad Ibn 'A'isha in order to participate in the Battle of az-Zallāqa in 479 A.H/1086 A.D. thus prolonging the Muslim presence in al-Andalus for another four centuries. This important historical event was of course preceded by the exchange of missions and correspondence not only between al-Andalus and the Maghrib, but also between the Taifa rulers who were threatened from the North by Alfonso's expansionist policy.



*This is a painting of the diplomatic mission which was sent by Yūsuf Ibn Tāshafīn to the court of the 'Abbāsīd caliph in Baghdad in the year 490 A.H./1097 A.D. and which included the Imām Ibn al-'Arabī and his son the Qādī Abū Bakr who were received by the Caliph al-Mustansir bi-Allāh in the presence of his minister Ibn Jubayr. The purpose of this mission was to inform the 'Abbāsīd caliph of the general situation and latest developments in the Maghrib. This painting was made by Salāh Jiyād.*



### Relations with the Republics of the Mediterranean Sea.

The simple rumour that a mission from Tripoli was to seek Yūsuf Ibn Tāshafīn's assistance in order to occupy fortresses under Roger II, the ruler of Sicily, was sufficient to motivate the Sicilian ruler to send a diplomatic mission from Sicily in 515 A.H./1121 A.D. which signed a treaty with the Moroccan ruler concerning commercial exchange with Morocco in return for the payment of a certain sum of money to be paid on export and import goods.

Historical sources also mention the existence of diplomatic missions sent to the Murābitūn by European nations (bilād ar-Rūm) in 524 A.H./1130 A.D. and a diplomatic mission sent by the Murābitūn and headed by Admiral Muhammad Ibn-Maymūn to the republic of Pisa which was then one of the most important powers in the Mediterranean Sea and this mission signed a treaty with Pisa on the 20<sup>th</sup> Sha'bān 527 A.H. 26<sup>th</sup> June 1133 A.D.

It is not surprising for us to find the Republic of Genoa following the path of the Republic of Pisa, to be followed in turn by the Republic of Marseille, and the Republic of Amalfi which was renowned for its wealth, its extensive commercial activities and its maritime laws known as *Latabula Amalphitana*. The Republic of Amalfi in effect asked for Morocco's assistance against the aggressions of Pisa. We should also not forget others who developed similar relations with the Murābitūn of Morocco such as Venice, Salerno, and Gaete. All these countries considered the Murābitūn with great fear and admiration and considered their nation as a superpower, so they tried to obtain the Moravedī or *ad-dīnār al-murābitī* which was considered as the most precious « hard currency » of the time.

### Relations with the Caliphate of Baghdād.

The diplomatic activities of the Murābitūn reached as far as the Caliphate of Baghdād where the presence of the Moroccan dynasty was felt from its earliest times when Abū Bakr Ibn-'Umar sent his envoys to the 'Abbāsī caliph in order to inform him of his military excursions into the Empire of Ghāna in support of the future Islamic state. Another Moroccan mission was sent to the Caliph al-Mutaqaddī bi-Allāh. Although we do not know the names of those who headed these two missions, we do know that a third mission was headed by al-Qādī 'Atīq Ibn Ibrāhīm and a fourth mission to the 'Abbāsī Caliph al-Mustadhhar was headed by the Faqīh 'Abd-Allāh Ibn-al-'Arabī accompanied by his son Abū Bakr. The purpose of this last mission was to inform the 'Abbāsī Caliph of the triumph of the Murābitūn at the Battle of az-Zallāqa and of the weakness of the Taifa rulers in al-Andalus and their failure to confront the crusade against the Islamic West. He also informed him of the propaganda circulating in al-Andalus concerning the illegitimacy of 'Abbāsī rulers on the

basis that they were not descendants of the tribe of Ouravsh, and on the Moroccan desire to create a unified Islamic state. This project was the first of its kind since it attempted to unify the eastern and the western wings of the Islamic world, despite the sacrifices that this decision required on the part of the Moroccan rulers since it implied renouncing to all power and ambition.

Relations between Morocco and Baghdād continued for long and we find other envoys who were sent to the 'Abbāsī capital such as Abū-Qāsim and Ibn Zuhri. It is further interesting to note that the correspondence of the period reflects the Moroccan rulers' will to unite the Maghrib with the Mashriq. Had it not been for the numerous disasters and perturbations which Baghdād experienced, the relations of the 'Abbāsī rulers with Morocco would have differed totally.

### **The Muwaḥḥidūn and their State**

- Refusal to Recognise the Abbāsīs
- Missions from the Middle East to Morocco
- The Muwaḥḥidūn in Constantinople
- Relations with the Rulers of Al-Andalus and the Christian Kings of Northern Spain.
- The Meaning and Symbolism of the Three Minarets in Morocco and Al-Andalus.
- Relations with the Holy See
- Relations with Sicily
- Missions to Tripoli and Tunis
- Relations with Genoa
- Relations with Pisa, Corsica and Sardinia
- Relations with Venice
- Relations with the King of Lyon.
- The Mission from the King of England
- Relations with Toulouse and Marseille
- Relations with Austria
- Relations with the African Kingdoms.

The arrival of the Muwahhidūn coincided with the decline of the 'Abbāsīs in Iraq which introduced a new factor in Morocco's relations with the Middle East namely the sharp conflict and competition between Marrakesh and Baghdād. This conflict had serious repercussions at several levels over a long period of time and greatly affected the movement of the Muwahhidūn in the Middle East, Europe and even in Africa. This was in effect one of the consequences of the tireless diplomatic movement on a global scale for which we have numerous Arabic documents and manuscripts in European libraries. The effects of this movement are even reflected in the missions which were sent to Morocco, members of which often had to wait for their turn in the Moroccan capital before they were received, and they are equally reflected in the different groups of political refugees who sought political asylum in Morocco, some of whom included scholars and princes from Europe and the Middle East.

#### **Refusal to Recognise the 'Abbāsīs.**

The Muwahhidūn who were Moroccan, withdrew their recognition of Baghdād and ordered that the Friday sermon be read in their name and not in the name of the 'Abbāsīs, and the latter immediately recognised the danger that this step constituted and the real intention of the Muwahhidūn to create a wide Islamic unity directed from Marrakesh and not from Baghdād as the Murābitūn had previously had in mind. This measure led to a number of reactions not only in *Dār al-Islām* but even in certain parts of Africa and al-Andalus when a number of rulers decided to become independent of the Muwahhidūn on the pretext that they recognised the sovereignty of Baghdād. Consequently, the diplomatic missions to Morocco took the form of reconnaissance missions and engaged in destructive activities which had the most negative effects on al-Andalus, particularly when Qarāqūsh and Abū-Zayyān became allies of the rebels. This conflict and competition had strong cultural effects on Morocco where new schools, academic teaching posts, and water clocks were introduced in Morocco in order to compete with those which existed in Baghdād.

#### **Missions from the Middle East to Morocco.**

The rulers in the Middle East eventually felt the threat of possible attacks by the fleet of the Muwahhidūn against the Syrian coast and received reports on the



*jihād* of the Muwahhidūn and asked the Moroccans for their assistance when they sent diplomatic missions such as the one headed by Sālīh Ibn Razīk or the one sent by Salāh ed-Dīn al-Ayyūbī to Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Mansūr which was headed by al-Amīr Ibn Munqid. Much has been written on the missions which were sent from the Middle East to Morocco in the greatest detail, such as their secrets, the presents and treasures they brought with them and the poems and literature they transmitted, as well as the impact of these missions on Syria where they contributed to increase the morale of the Muslims in that region as reported by the traveller Ibn-Jubayr.

#### **The Muwahhidūn in Constantinople.**

The Turkish sources discuss the presence of the Muwahhidūn in Constantinople which they reached via the Greek islands. The Moroccan presence during this period reached as far as the Maldiv Archipelago in East Asia where the local inhabitants embraced Islam thanks to the Moroccans who carried their faith that far away.

#### **Relations with the Rulers of al-Andalus and the Christian Kings of Northern Spain.**

An examination of the relations of the Muwahhidūn in al-Andalus reflects their continuous efforts to confront and end the different revolts against the Muslim rulers and their continuous contacts with the Christian kings with the object of neutralising their ambitions and expansionist policies.

The diplomatic activities of the Moroccan state were intense during this period as reflected in the numerous Andalusian diplomatic missions which reached Morocco when the Muwahhidūn established their state and the treasures which they brought with them. One of the most outstanding missions which were received by Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf was headed by the Castilian leader Fernando Rodriguez de Castro, the son in law of king Fernando II of Leon known as El Baboso. He headed this mission which included his two brothers in 563 A.H./1168 A.D. in an attempt to form an alliance with the Prince of the Faithful. This mission remained in Marrakesh over a period of five months and culminated in a treaty between the Moroccan ruler and the King of Leon. Its effects were strongly felt by the Portuguese King Alfonso Henriquez. The Khalīfa Abū Ya'qūb also received another mission in Marrakesh in 565 A.D./1170 A.D. from Ibn-Hamshak seeking help from him, and the caliph responded favourably, which led Ibn-Hamshak to come to Morocco where he died in Meknes as an official guest. The court of the Muwahhidūn agreed to offer assistance to those who sought it on numerous occasions and they often sent





missions to their allies in order to continue their contact with them and to sign treaties. This is clearly reflected in the mission which was sent to the King of Leon under the leadership of Ibn-Wazīr and Ibū-l-'Alā' Ibn-'Azrūn leading to the alliance of 566 A.H/1170 A.D. In 567 A.H/1172 A.D., Seville witnessed a summit meeting at the highest level when the caliph Abū-Ya'qūb met the Amīr Hilāl Ibn-Mardhanīsh who resigned to his sovereignty over Murcia in the caliph's favour and resided in Ibn 'Abbād's palace during his sojourn. He further emphasized his loyalty to the caliph by marrying the latter's daughter.

When the Muwahhidūn besieged Huete, they were contacted with the object of signing a treaty of peace with the intermediary of 'Abd ar-Rahmān Ibn Sa'īd. The Muwahhidūn consequently returned bringing with them church bells as a symbol of their triumph northeast of Toledo. As a reaction to the burning of *minbars* in the mosques which were occupied by fanatical Christians, these bells were transformed into chandeliers which were sent as presents to different mosques in the Maghrib and the Middle East. It is therefore not surprising that the Christian kings had a regular contact with the court of the Muwahhidūn and sent numerous missions with the object of negotiating and signing peace treaties. One of these missions was the one sent by Nuno de Lara, Prince of Toledo, and there were others sent by King Alfonso VIII of Castille and Alfonso Enriquez, King of Portugal.

The numerous missions which were sent to the Caliph from all parts of his kingdom in order to congratulate him and to renew their allegiance and loyalty to him are difficult to reconstruct. Among the most important of these missions was the one sent by Ishāq Ibn-Ghāniya, the ruler of the Balearic Islands who had previously been an ally of the 'Abbāsī rulers. The Caliph responded to this mission by sending his own headed by the knight El Reverter, which led rebels to react, particularly when they received news of the Caliph's death following his wound at the battle of Santa Maria (*Shantarīn*), by sending for assistance against the new Caliph Abū-Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Mansūr who was on his way to Cordoba with the objective of continuing the course traced by his late father. It was in Cordoba that the Caliph Abū-Yūsuf received the Castilian King's ambassador who came to congratulate him and to express his desire to renew the peace treaty with him. The Caliph also received the ambassador of the King of Leon as well as the Portuguese king's ambassador.

While Morocco's foreign policy was directed towards the peaceful policy described above, responding positively to all kinds of peaceful demands, its real objective was to consolidate its power internally in order to confront the rebels who received all kinds of assistance from the rulers in the Middle East. The Christian rulers in Spain were, however, fully aware of the long term objectives of this policy, and of the strategy adopted by Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Mansūr. The Caliph was consequently surprised while on his way to *Hiriquya* when the King of Castile declared in 586 A.H/1190 A.D. that he had ended his peace treaty with the Moroccan king and sent the latter a mission headed by Ibn-al-Fakhkhār with

the object of discussing this matter with the Castilian king. This development was followed by the Battle of Alarcos in 591 A.H/1194 A.D. which led to the triumph of the Muwahhidūn and the escape of the Castilians to Toledo including the Castilian king who was badly wounded.

#### **The Meaning and Symbolism of the Three Minarets in Morocco and Al-Andalus : The Giralda, the Kutubiyya and the Hassān Towers.**

Tourists from all parts of the world admire the beauty of the Giralda in Seville, the Kutubiyya tower in Marrakesh and the Hassān tower in Rabat, but few know that all three minarets were built by the caliph Abū-Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Mansūr as an expression of thanks to God for having triumphed at the Battle of Alarcos (*al-'Irak*). The symbolic value of these minarets is consequently rather unique.

While al-Mansūr was on his way to recover Toledo which had fallen in Christian hands in 478 A.H/1085 A.D., the defeated king's mother threw herself on the ground in tears, pleading with him to be pitiful, to which he responded by accepting her plea and presenting her with treasures and gifts. However, the Caliph did not hesitate in 592 H/1195 A.D. to respond to the mission which was sent by Alfonso IX of Leon who planned to attack Castile in the same way that Sancho VII of Navarra had done. The Castilian king's ambassadors contacted the Caliph, asked for his forgiveness and proposed a peace treaty between the Caliph and Alfonso IX. After hesitating and giving them some conditions, thus pleasing his previous enemies, the Moroccan ruler agreed to sign the treaty in 593 A.H/1196 A.D.

Among the summit meetings which the Caliph attended was the one in which he met the King of Leon whose objective was to receive aid in his confrontation with the King of Leon. Another summit meeting was held in Marrakesh during the reign of the Caliph Abū-'Abd-Allāh an-Nāsir in 595 A.H/1199 A.D. and it was attended by King Sancho VII of Leon who saw his kingdom threatened by the King of Castile and the King of Aragon. This royal visit to Marrakesh lasted approximately two years thus leading to close relations between Sancho and an-Nāsir who was preparing to face the rebels in the neighbouring regions of Navarra.

Following the failure of political and diplomatic efforts to put an end to the rebellious movement in the Balearic Islands, an-Nāsir organised a large military expedition, and succeeded in crushing the rebels. This increased an-Nāsir's prestige among the Christian Kings, particularly the King of Leon who sent his ambassador Ibn-al-Fakhkhār to Marrakesh in the year 600 A.H./1204 A.D. asking for a renewal of the peace treaty.

However, the King of Castile soon began to renew his old ambition of organising a crusade in order to expand his kingdom and this time he asked for the assistance of the highest authority in Christendom, namely the Pope, who



advised him to wait for more favourable circumstances in order to assure his triumph.

It is equally important to note in this context that the Moroccan reconnaissance activities in foreign affairs were significant as is reflected for example in an-Nāsir's visit to al-Andalus with the objective of surveying the situation closely. During this visit, he received many letters and a group of missions which came to congratulate him and to ask him to renew peace treaties. However, he was not very fortunate and lost his life in the Battle of al-Iqāb (las Navas de Tolosa) in 609 A.H/1212 A.D.

With the establishment of the Caliph Abū Ya'qūb, known as al-Mustansir, a diplomatic mission was sent to Marrakesh in 612 A.H/1215 A.D. by the crown of Castile headed by Ibn-al-Fakhhār with the object of opening a new page in Castilian-Moroccan relations and signing a truce and a peace treaty with Morocco. The Caliph responded positively to this gesture by signing a peace treaty with Castile on the 6<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan 618 A.H/24<sup>th</sup> of October 1221 A.D. The Caliph was fully aware of the developments in the eastern provinces of his caliphate.

Consequently, peace did not last long between the Muwahhidūn and the Christian kingdoms, and al-Andalus was again plagued by conflict, internal strife and confrontation despite the intervention of the Muwahhidūn and the efforts of the mission which was sent to Marrakesh by the King of Castile in 618 A.H/1220 A.D.

With the establishment of Abū 'Abd-Allāh al-'Adil in 621 A.H/1224 A.D., several rebellions broke out in the provinces of al-Andalus which were supported by the Christian kingdoms thus avenging the victors of the Battle of al-'Irak (Alarcos). Numerous missions were exchanged between the Andalusian ruler and the rebels, with the objective of saving the situation, which nevertheless slipped completely out of hand. Moroccan diplomats too did their best to save what could be saved. For example, the governor of Cordoba who incidentally happened to be the Prince Abū-l-'Alā' Idrīs b. Ya'qūb al-Mansūr more commonly known as al-Ma'mūn, offered to sign a peace treaty with Fernando III, King of Castile in 624 A.H/1227 A.D., and sent his ambassador Abū-l-Qāsim to negotiate another peace treaty with the Muwahhidūn for a large sum of money.

The prince's efforts did not bear fruit because those across the Strait of Gibraltar did not respect their engagements. He then decided to cross over to Morocco in order to explain his delicate situation, but before doing so, he renewed his truce the following year, and he even signed a military alliance with Castile on conditions he considered to be favourable even though the other princes regarded them as unfavourable.

This situation favoured the rebellious movement in both al-Andalus and the Maghrib and the number of rebels increased gradually. This movement was not only supported by the 'Abbāsīs of Baghdād, nor was its motivating force limited



to the personal ambitions of the governors in different Almohad provinces. Rather, it was also encouraged by certain Christian kingdoms which sought to distract the Muwahhidūn and to weaken their state. These Christian kingdoms in effect supported these rebels militarily as was the case of the prince Idrīs b. Ya'qūb.

The example of the Andalusian rebels was followed by other rebellious movements in different parts of the Maghrib and they all received external support. It is particularly significant that these rebellious leaders soon sent their envoys to Baghdad, Castile and al-Andalus and received diplomatic missions and signed peace treaties with other nations.

When a diplomatic mission was sent by Ibn al-Ahmar of Granada in 637 A.H/1239 A.D. to the court of the Caliph Abū Muhammad 'Abd al-Wāhid known as ar-Rashīd with the object of renewing his allegiance to the Muwahhidūn, the Caliph did not take this gesture seriously, because he knew that the Banū-l-Ahmar rulers were unreliable and that they were capable of switching sides easily.

Contacts with the Muwahhidūn were intense and the correspondence exchanged between different parties was equally impressive, which reflects the enormous effort on the part of the Moroccans to save the situation.

The development of internal events also reflects the fact that in spite of the numerous rebellions, the central authority in Morocco continued to consider its sovereignty over all parts of the empire and it also continued to consider itself responsible for the fate of its subjects wherever they were. This trend is clearly reflected in the decrees (*dhahā'ir*) of 637 A.H/1240 A.D. during the period of the Caliph ar-Rashīd and in the Caliph Abū-l-Hassan 'Alī as-Sa'īd's plans to recover Tunis and Tlemsan which had rebelled and gained their autonomy.

#### Relations with the Holy See.

Besides the relations of the Muwahhidūn with all the kingdoms mentioned above, they also had important relations with the Pope. One of the first important missions received by the Caliph Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb al-Mansur in 595 A.H/1199 A.D. in Marrakesh was sent by Pope Innocent III. The purpose of this mission was to liberate the «forty thousand prisoners» who remained in al-Mansūr's prisons since the Battle of al-'Irak (Alarcos). For humanitarian reasons, the Caliph responded favorably to the Pope's demand and released all his prisoners. One of these prisoners built a mosque in his province of Les Ardennes which bore the name Muhammad.

One of the most impressive contacts with the Popes during the period of the Caliph Abū l-Hassan 'Alī known as as-Sa'dī, was with Pope Gregory IX to whom he sent a letter on the condition of the Christian residents in Morocco. It was in Marrakesh in 644 A.H/1246 A.D. that the Archbishop Fernandez congratulated the Caliph for his triumph over his enemies and asked him to compro-

mise on certain positions which would have transferred the crusade to the heart of Africa. However, the Caliph as-Sa'īd refrained from answering the letter which was carried to him by the ambassador Lope. It was the fate of the Caliph Abū Hafs 'Umar al-Murtadā to answer this letter when he addressed a letter dated on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Rabi' 648 A.H/10<sup>th</sup> June 1250 A.D. to « ...the spiritual leaders of the kings of Christendom.. »

In a letter to the Pope, the caliph strongly criticised ambassador Lope's proposals and his conduct in the following terms : « When your Grace should decide to send us your representative, please choose a person of good conduct, manners, reason and high merits. »

#### **Relations with Sicily.**

Roger II realised that it was in the cultural and civilisational interest of Sicily to preserve the Islamic heritage after Sicily had fallen in his hands in 484 A.H/1091 A.D as a result of the internal conflicts between the Arab leaders, but this gracious act did not prevent him from adopting his expansionist policy. Consequently, the ambitious Normans sailed eastwards to attack Islamic lands and to conquer Tripoli and Tunis.

#### **Missions to Tripoli and Tunis.**

Numerous missions were sent to Caliph 'Abd al-Mu'min asking for his assistance in saving Tripoli and Tunis, to which the Muwāḥḥidūn responded by sending their fleet across the Mediterranean and their soldiers by land towards the East in 555 A.H/1160 A.D. The caliph 'Abd-al-Mu'min had received a diplomatic mission from Tunis which included twelve members of whom some were Sunnis and some were *Khawārij*, and another mission from Gafsa headed by Yahyā b. Tamīm and still another mission from Tripoli headed by Ibn Matrūh. The Muwāḥḥidūn organised a siege on Mehdiyya and surrounded William's fleet. The Normans were left only with the option of sending their envoys to the Caliph pleading for his pardon and asking for his permission to leave the city of Mehdiyya, to which 'Abd al-Mu'min gave his consent. The Caliph celebrated this victory and changed the name of the Moroccan fortress of Rabat-Salé to Mehdiyya. The Normans did not forget their defeat at Mehdiyya and began to attack the Muwāḥḥidūn's fleet, but without much success, which led them to realise that their only choice was to ask for peace with the Moroccans.

This gave the rulers of Sicily a unique opportunity to express their desire for maintaining peaceful relations, to start fresh diplomatic relations as a means of expressing this desire and to forget the past. Their pirates had captured part of the Moroccan fleet carrying the Caliph's daughter on board while on her way to

be wedded to one of the Muwahhidūn princes. Upon the realisation of the Sicilians that they had captured a princess, they received her with pomp and returned her to the Muwahhidūn carrying gifts to her father the caliph 'Abd al-Mu'min who was deeply touched by this noble gesture. As a consequence, following twenty years of conflict and confrontation, relations between Morocco and Sicily saw a new phase. Hence the diplomatic mission sent by Guillaume II to the caliph Abū Ya'qūb while in Ifriqiya in 576 A.H/1181 A.D. led to a peace treaty in which the Sicilian King agreed to pay a yearly tribute to the caliph. Among the gifts which were sent by king Guillaume II to the Caliph was a precious ruby of an unusually large size which the Caliph carefully placed among the precious gifts he received including 'Uthmān's copy of the *Qur'ān*. The peace and commercial treaty between Guillaume II and the Caliph Abū Ya'qūb was consequently signed in Palermo in 567 A.H/1181 A.D.

This rapprochement had positive effects on the conditions of the Muslims living in Sicily because they had greatly suffered as a religious minority whose lands had been confiscated. On the other hand, their contacts with the Muwahhidūn, who received regular secret missions from the Muslims of Sicily, reflect their continuous efforts to defend their rights in Sicily as well as their allegiance to the Muwahhidūn and their cause. For example, the Friday sermons were read in the name of the Muwahhidūn in the Sicilian mosques. The triumph which an-Nāsir was able to achieve in Mallorca where he confronted Ibn-Ghāniya greatly contributed to raising the morale of the Muslims in Sicily who had suffered from great injustice and they sent him a mission in 607 A.H/1210 A.D. to congratulate him and to inform him of their sole allegiance to the Muwahhidūn. The desire of the Muwahhidūn to indirectly assist their Muslim brothers in Sicily was the main motive behind the renewal of the commercial treaty between Frederick II and the governor of Tunis Abū Ishāq in 617 A.H/618 A.D. during the reign of the Caliph Yūsuf II known as al-Mustansir.

Another Sicilian mission to the court of Marrakesh was sent by Frederick II in 640 A.H/1242 A.D and it was received by the Caliph Abū-l-Hassan 'Alī b. al-Mu'mūn known as as-Sa'īd to discuss the possibility of crushing rebellious movements in North Africa. This mission returned carrying gifts of great value.

#### **Relations with Genoa.**

The relations of the Muwahhidūn were equally strong with the Republic of Genoa which signed its first treaty with the Caliph 'Abd-al-Mu'min as early as 547-548 A.H/1153 A.D. The liberation of Mehdiyya by the Muwahhidūn was one of the reasons why the Republic of Genoa sent another mission headed by Ottobono in 555 A.H/1161 A.D. and signed a commercial treaty lasting for five years between the two countries stressing that Genoa would pay a certain percentage on the profits of the commercial exchange between the two countries.



Genoa signed another peace treaty with the Muwahhidūn in 573 A.H/1177 A.D. which led to the establishment of a Genoan inn (*finduq*) in Larache. Even though the Genoans supported the rebels in Mallorca, the Muwahhidūn maintained their good relations with Genoa until they crushed the rebels definitely. This attitude is, for example, reflected in the caliph an-Nāsir's agreement to renew contacts with Genoa in 606 A.H/1210 A.D. which led to new dynamic commercial relations between the two countries.

Moroccan diplomacy was also able to overcome another obstacle which threatened to jeopardise its relations with Genoa when a group of Genoan adventurers occupied Sebta in 632 A.H/1236 A.D. where a general consul represented Genoa. Normal relations were again established with Genoa and an alliance was formed during the reign of the Caliph 'Abd al-Wāhid known as ar-Rashīd. Genoa also formed a similar alliance with the governor of the Muwahhidun in Tunis in 633 A.H/1236 A.D. thanks to the efforts of the Genoan ambassador Corrado.

#### **Relations with Pisa, Corsica and Sardinia**

The relations of the Muwahhidūn with the Republic of Pisa began in 561 A.H/1166 A.D when the latter sent a diplomatic mission headed by Cocco Grifi to the Caliph Abu Yaqūb in Marrakesh where a peace treaty was signed. This treaty was respected even when Pisa supported the rebels in Mallorca and it was renewed in 773 A.H / 1177 A.D. In 576 A.H / 1181 A.D. the bishop of the Republic of Pisa sent a letter to the Caliph Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf as King for his assistance, as had been agreed upon in the peace treaty between the two countries, with the objective of liberating a ship which was captured by the governor of Tripoli. This letter was followed by another one in 578 A.H/1182 A.D. which was sent by the Bishop of Pisa, Corsica and Sardinia to the Caliph Abū Ya'qūb who was unhappy with Pisa's contacts with Mallorca. It was on this subject that two copies of a peace « letter » were signed in 580 A.H/1184 A.D. giving Pisa the guarantee that those supporting the Muwahhidūn would not interfere with its interests. This unusual letter was signed on the Caliph's behalf by his Governor in Tunis Abū Ibrāhīm b. Muhammad b. 'Alī.

Upon the Caliph Abū-Yūsuf Ya'qūb's establishment as Caliph, he received a diplomatic mission from Pisa which was sent to congratulate him and to express Pisa's desire to renew its peace treaty. Five copies of the letter were in effect signed in 582 A.H/1186 A.D. between the Caliph and the Republic of Pisa following an important diplomatic mission which was sent to al-Mansūr and which included leaders who represented different parts of the Republic of Pisa.



Correspondence and the exchange of diplomatic missions between the two countries continued with the objective of solving problems of mutual concern in the best spirit of good neighbourhood between the Muwahhidūn and Pisa. Among the more important letters was one sent in 579 A.H/1201 A.D. when the Caliph an-Nāsir decided to put an end to the rebellion in the eastern regions of the Caliphate and sent his envoy Nāsir b. 'Abd-Allāh from Sebta to inform the rulers of Pisa of his plans and to ask for their support. Al-Mansūr also took advantage of this contact to renew the close ties between Pisa and the Caliphate when the peace treaty was renewed in 608 A.H/1211 A.D.

#### **Relations with Venice.**

The occupation of Mehdiyya in 555 A.H/1160 A.D. by the Muwahhidūn had the same impact on the Republic of Venice which competed with Genoa, that it had on Genoa and Pisa as the ruler of Venice contacted the Caliph 'Abd al-Mu'min immediately after this event. For political reasons, the Muwahhidūn responded favourably to this initiative despite the fact that Venice supported the rebels in Mallorca. When this rebellion in Mallorca was finally crushed during the end of the fifth century A.H. and the beginning of the sixth, relations improved between the Venitians and the Muwahhidūn as is reflected in the treaties they signed, particularly those relating to Tunis.

In our examination of Morocco's relations with the Republic of Pisa, we have also seen that its relations were equally cordial with Sardinia and Corsica. This was particularly true in 578 A.H/1182 A.D. and in 582 A.H/1186 A.D. following an-Nāsir's triumph over the rebels of Mallorca. Morocco had further close ties with other states including Florence, Naples, and Limontì.

#### **Relations with the King of Lyon.**

Besides the relations with the above mentioned republics, the Caliph an-Nāsir received numerous important missions at the highest level while he was busy crushing his rebellious troops in Mallorca, including a mission sent by the King of Lyon which was welcomed with great pomp and presented to the Caliph by his interpreter Abū-l-Ju'aysh 'Asākīr. This King is also known to have sent the Caliph the original copy of the Prophet Muhammad's (s.a.w.) letter to Heraclius when he asked for an-Nāsir's military support.

#### **The Mission from the King of England.**

Another event that is worth mentioning because of its grave consequences is the mission sent by King John of England. The English sources have described this mission in the greatest detail. Its objective was to obtain the Caliph an-Nāsir's assistance against his rebellious subjects. In return for this help, the English mission promised the Caliph that the King of England and all his subjects would embrace Islam. Consequently, had it not been for the Battle of

وَلَهُمْ أَنْ يُحْفَظُوا فِي بِلَادِ الْمُؤَيَّدِينَ عَنْهُمْ لِلَّهِ عَلَى عَادَتِهِمْ وَتَجَرُّوا مِنْ الْقَتْلِ  
 وَالْجَبَايَةِ عَلَى رُسُلِهِمْ وَتَتَعَوَّاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَنْ يَدَّأَهُمْ أَوْ التَّسَبُّبَ بِهِمْ أَوْ إِلَيْهِمْ  
 وَإِذَا أَلْقَيْتَهُمْ فِي الْبَحْرِ أَسَافِلُ الْمُؤَيَّدِينَ تَصْرِفُهُمُ اللَّهُ قَبْلَ سَبِيلِهِمْ إِلَى تَعَرُّفِهِمْ وَلَا  
 إِلَى إِذَا بَيَّعَهُمْ فِي نَفْسِهِمْ وَلَا أَمْوَالِهِمْ وَلَا لِيَدَّيْهِمْ مِنْ شُؤْنِهِمْ أَعَالِمُ وَقَدْ بَيَّعَهُمْ  
 وَأَمَّا لَا حُكْمَ سَلَمِهِمْ وَهَدَنَتِهِمْ وَعَلَى هَذِهِ الْأَصُولِ الْمَقْرُوءَةِ وَالْفَصُولِ الْمَعْتَرَةِ  
 انْتُظِمَتْ هَذِهِ الْمَهَادَنَةُ وَجُعِلَ هَذَا الْكِتَابُ خَمْسَ نَسَخٍ بِسُكُونٍ مِنْهَا وَاحِدَةٌ فِي  
 بَلَدِهِمْ وَيَسْتَنْظَرُونَ بِهَا فَيَهْتَدُونَ إِلَى بِلَادِ الْمُنَادِيَةِ لِيُفْعَلَ الْوَصُولُ إِلَيْهِمْ تَوْسِعًا  
 عَلَيْهِمْ فَأَكْمَلْتُ أَلْفَ لَمَنَةٍ لِنَفْسِهِمْ وَكُتِبَ فِي أَوَّلِ شَهْرِ رَجَبِ الْمَعْظَمِ هَاجِمِ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ وَثَمَانِينَ  
 وَخَمْسَ مِائَةٍ

This is an extract from the treaty which was signed between the Caliph  
 Al-Mansūr and the Republics of the Mediterranean Sea in Ramadan 582  
 A.H./1186 A.D. It includes the following phrase, «... They must keep their  
 traditions in the territories governed by the Muwahhidūn... If you should come  
 across the fleet of the Muwahhidūn may Allāh lead them to triumph, do not harm  
 them... Five copies of the treaty have been made, one of which is to be sent to their  
 country and the rest are to be carried as evidence in the regions in which they are  
 permitted to travel...»

*al-Iqāb* (Las Navas de Tolosa) which greatly weakened the Muwahhidūn's position in al-Andalus. England would have probably become an Islamic nation and would probably have figured among today's Islamic nations such as Pakistan or Nigeria. This historical phase constituted one of the most brilliant chapters in the annals of Moroccan history and it stands out as one of the richest in the medieval period.

#### **Relations with Toulouse and Marseille.**

The Caliph an-Nasir's ability to impose his rule in the Balearic Islands also impressed the French, particularly Marseille which had been among the supporters of the rebels against the Muwahhidūn until the latter crushed all opposition in the Balearic Islands. Consequently, the Count of Toulouse Raymond VI contacted the Caliph an-Nāsir in 609 A.H/1213 A.D. and asked for military assistance against his political opponents. Moreover, numerous French businessmen from Marseille continued to carry on their commercial activities in Sebta freely since 608 A.H/ 1212 A.D. where they were represented officially by a consul general who was in charge of their interests and who resided in a hotel and enjoyed full diplomatic immunity. The normal relations with the French continued just as they did with other nations.

#### **Relations with Austria.**

One of the oldest and most interesting Austrian epics which has attracted great interest and constituted the object of study in German encyclopedias known as the epic of Nebelungen, refers to the fact that the Germanic regions imported several products from Morocco including great amounts of the best silk which other royal families did not possess in any other part of the world. Moroccan silk was doubtlessly sent via Sicily with which the Muwahhidūn maintained normal relations over a long period of time.

#### **Relations with the African Kingdoms.**

The Muwahhidūn also maintained close ties with the African kingdoms and principalities and respected their internal affairs as long as they continued to pledge allegiance to the caliphate. The Muwahhidūn tried hard to overcome their economic problems which resulted from Sijilmāssa's support of the rebels in Massoraca and they pledged allegiance to the 'Abbāsīs of Baghdād during that period. These kingdoms therefore maintained their allegiance to the Muwahhidūn as is reflected in the participation of some of them side by side with the Caliph in several battles including the Battle of *al-Arak* (Alarcos) or the Battle of *al-Iqāb* (Las Navas de Tolosa). These African Kings and princes sent diplomatic missions to the court of al-Mansūr and Arabic letters were exchanged between the Caliph and some of the African principalities like those of Ghāna which had not embraced Islam as expressed in the detailed accounts given by the historian *as-Sarkhasī*.

### **The Banū Marīn and their State.**

- Relations with Granada, Castile and Aragón
- Relations with the Kings of Portugal
- Relations with the Canary Islands
- Confronting the Rebellious movements
- Relations with the Kings of the Mashriq
- Relations with the Mediterranean Republics
- Relations with the Kings of France
- Relations with the Holy See.
- Relations with the African Kingdoms
- Relations with the Early Ottomans.



In spite of the difficult conditions which characterised the establishment of the state of Banū Marīn, it was their very « difficult history » which gave them the experience required for them to become such successful political leaders and it was this experience which enabled them to carry out successful negotiations in the most difficult circumstances and to pursue their diplomatic efforts with so much success. It was precisely the extremely limited military means of the Banū Marīn rulers which led them to concentrate on the development of diplomatic efforts and which also led to their sophisticated politicisation. It is in this context that we should examine their negotiations with Castile, Aragon, Portugal and Granada and their ability to successfully confront numerous efforts to end the Maghrib's sovereignty and unity. Furthermore, they continued to develop their relations with the kings of Egypt, Syria and Arabia and with the Mediterranean Republics, France, England, the Holy See, the sub-Saharan kingdoms in the Sudan and the early Ottoman Empire.

#### **Relations with Granada, Castile and Aragon.**

The Sultan Ya'qūb b. 'Abd al-Haqq was the first to inaugurate the diplomatic relations of the Banū Marīn dynasty in 658 A.H/1260 A.D when he sent Alfonso X of Castile a mission headed by Abū Bakr b. Ya'lā to carry out negotiations concerning the situation which resulted from the attack on Salé by Spanish pirates. He also received many letters and diplomatic missions from the princes of al-Andalus who sought his assistance in order to confront Christian attacks in different regions of al-Andalus. For example, he welcomed the missions sent by the ruler of Granada in 670 A.H/1272 A.D. and in 671 A.H/1273 A.D. as well as a mission from the ruler of Malaga on the same date. However, before giving these missions a final answer, he signed a treaty in Barcelona with King Jaime I, of Aragon in 673 A.H/1274 A.D. with the object of recovering Sebta from the ruler of Granada who had occupied it during the end of the period of the Muwahhidūn, with the support of his ally the King of Castile. During this period Sultan Ya'qūb considered his presence and rule over Sebta a necessary condition for supporting the Muwahhidūn in al-Andalus.

It was consequently only after recovering Sebta and signing a truce with the Yaghmurasen in central Morocco that he received a diplomatic mission from the Banū-l-Ahmar of Granada at Tangier in 674 A.H/1275 A.D. This mission accompanied him to al-Andalus where he led the Muslims to victory in 674 A.H/1275 A.D. This new dynamism led the King of Castile to send him an

important mission with the objet of proposing a peace treaty in 676 A.H/1278 A.D. between Alfonso on the one hand and the Moroccan sovereign and the ruler of Granada on the other. However, despite the Sultan's efforts to reconcile the ruler of Granada and the ruler of Malaga, the differences between the two Andalusian rulers increased and attained dangerous proportions. Confrontation between them became more evident following the death of the ruler of Malaga when his son visited the Moroccan sovereign and presented him with the keys of his principality in the same year (676 A.H/1278 A.D). This gesture infuriated Alfonso who immediately nullified his peace treaty with Morocco and formed a triangular military alliance which included Yaghmurasen and Banū-l-Ahmar who had formerly signed a peace treaty with the Moroccan sovereign Abū Yūsuf. This triangular alliance led the Banū Marīn ruler to react with the objective of dissolving this alliance by directly confronting the Yaghmurasen on the one hand and trying to convince the Banū-l-Ahmar of their spiritual and « natural » duties on the other.

A fortunate development occurred during this period which the Banū Marīn exploited fully in order to alter the balance of power vis-à-vis the triangular alliance. Prince Sancho successfully revolted against his father Alfonso and sent a mission to Marrakesh in 681 A.H/1282 A.D. seeking the sovereign's assistance. The latter consequently hurried to al-Andalus where Alfonso received him with great pomp and presented him with the crown which he had inherited from his ancestors. Incidentally, Ibn Khaldūn saw this crown personally in the court of Banū Marīn. Not only did Abū Yūsuf offer him military assistance, but he intervened diplomatically by contacting Philip III of France on his behalf. This diplomatic dynamism led the Banū-l-Ahmar rulers to contact the Moroccan sovereign and to sign a peace treaty with him in 682 A.H/1283 A.D. On the other hand, the Moroccans did not hesitate to congratulate Sancho following his father's death in order to improve their relations with him. Nor did the Moroccans refrain from welcoming the Castilian rebels who sought political asylum in Morocco, thus benefitting from their administrative experience.

In 684 A.H/1285 A.D. the Moroccan sovereign agreed to sign a peace treaty with Sancho, the new King of Castile, when he received an important Castilian diplomatic mission in Algeciras and responded by sending his own mission headed by 'Abd al-Haqq known as at-Turjumān. This mission imposed several conditions aimed at putting an end to Castile's expansionist policy in the Islamic lands.

These contacts were crowned with a summit meeting between the Moroccan and the Spanish sovereigns near Wādī Lak (Luque) River on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Sha'bān 684 A.H/21<sup>st</sup> October 1285 A.D. The Moroccan representatives all wore bright clothes while the Castilians were all dressed in dark black according to their respective traditions. It was here that an agreement to sign a treaty was reached in the presence of the statesmen from both nations. Gifts were exchanged during this occasion which included rare Arabic manuscripts which were presented to the Moroccan sovereign.

Upon the establishment of Abū Ya'qūb as ruler, he inaugurated his reign with a new summit meeting with King Ibn al-Ahmar of Granada in a place not far from Marbella in Rabī 1 685 A.H./April-May 1286 A.D. when all their mutual problems were solved. It is important to remember the exchange of letters and missions that preceded these summits.

When Castile and Granada broke their treaties with the fall of Tarīf, Moroccan diplomatic and military activities increased greatly. This led to a change of attitude on the part of the Granadan ruler and he sent a mission headed by his cousin Abū Sa'īd and his minister 'Abd al-'Aziz ad-Dānī which led to a peace agreement in 692 A.H/1293 A.D. which was soon followed by a summit meeting between the Moroccan King and the King of Granada who signed a peace treaty during a celebration attended by the highest state officials.

Another mission from Granada was sent to the Sultan Yūsuf upon the succession of a new ruler in Granada and it was received by the Moroccan sovereign with great pomp in his fortress of Tlemsan in 703 A.H/1303 A.D. The Sultan Yūsuf welcomed another mission headed by F. Despin during the same year in Tlemsan from Jaime III of Aragon with the object of combatting Castile's expansionist policies.

Because the Moroccan sovereign was fully aware of Castile's long term objectives and of Granada's plans to conquer Sebta, he responded to the Aragonese mission immediately by sending another mission with the object of breaking the military alliance that was being formed against him on the one hand, and in order to defend the Moroccan fortress on the other. Following the occupation of Sebta early in 708 A.H/June 1308 A.D., the Sultan Abū Thābit sent a mission to Ibn al-Ahmar headed by al-Qādī Ibn-Abū as-Sabr in order to convince him to return to this fortress and to avoid bloodshed. He had also responded to the king of Aragon's mission which sought military assistance in the end of 703 A.H/June 1308 A.D. by sending a mission asking for military assistance for the liberation of Sebta.

Another diplomatic mission was sent during the reign of Abū Sulaymān which ended with a declaration by the King of Aragon on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Dhū-l-qi'da 708 A.H/3<sup>rd</sup> May 1309 A.D. promising to help the Moroccan ruler recover Sebta, which was actually carried out during the same year.

Several rulers of the Banū Marīn dynasty followed after Abū-Rabī' including Abū Sa'īd, Abū l-Hassan, Abū 'Inān, Abū Fāris as well as others who succeeded the mentioned above rulers.

The Banū Marīn period saw a confrontation which lasted over a period of more than a century on all fronts, often reaching extremely dangerous proportions. This confrontation was sometimes diplomatic and sometimes military. The rulers of Banū Marīn confronted the King of Castile, they carried on negotiations with the King of Aragon, they were in continuous contact with the King of Granada, and enjoyed a relative peace which characterised the external relations of the Banū Marīn rulers as a result of the numerous peace treaties which they signed with other nations, and which constitute an expression of the



sophisticated level of these relations. Treaties were often broken and agreements reached in summit meetings were not always respected. Yet despite all this, the Moroccan presence in al-Andalus was maintained despite many efforts to put an end to it. The Muslims continued to defend this land inch by inch, foot by foot and fortress by fortress. The Moroccan state employed every possible means to fulfill this purpose, including diplomatic and military methods. The great flexibility of the state of Banū Marīn is clear from the fact that their rulers did not hesitate to sign peace treaties, not only over years or months, but even during a limited number of days, or even hours. The reason is perhaps that time would change the situation even when it appeared to be most desperate. Furthermore, the sultan al-Ghaniy bi-Allāh was often confronted with natural disasters which constituted a serious obstacle to his plans and which led him to declare his famous statement which later became a symbol of al-Andalus, « Lā ghāliba illa Allāh » (Allāh alone is the ultimate victor).

During this period of more than a century, the Banū Marīn rulers had to confront the growing power of the Castilians and the Aragonese, they had to counter the latter's continuous military attacks, as well as the ambitions of the different leaders in al-Andalus. The latter were encouraged by the Christian kings of Spain, which often led to Granada's hostility against Morocco. For example Granada occupied Gibraltar, tried to occupy Sebta and attempted to put an end to all supporters of the Banū Marīn rulers in al-Andalus.

It was during this period of more than a hundred years that many scholars, princes and leaders were taken hostage or killed in large numbers despite the unique qualities of many among them. Many letters were exchanged during this period daily or weekly, between different rulers, between the rulers and their subjects and many letters were sent to the rulers in the Middle East to inform them of the developments in the Maghrib and al-Andalus, because the question of al-Andalus was considered to be of concern to all the Muslims wherever they were.

#### **Relations with the Kings of Portugal.**

Morocco's relations with Castile, Aragon and Granada did not prevent the development of relations with Portugal. In 818 A.H/1415 A.D. the Portuguese occupied Sebta and they attacked Tangier in 841 A.H/1438 A.D. This led the Moroccan diplomacy to react, despite the fact that it had been greatly weakened, with the object of negotiating the liberation of Don Fernando, the commander of the Portuguese army whom the Moroccan troops captured at Tangier, specifying its conditions for this liberation. The Portuguese accepted to leave Sebta and Tangier in return for Don Fernando's liberation, and this was executed following a treaty in 841 A.H/1437 A.D., but the hostage died in Fez before he was freed. The Portuguese responded by conquering al-Qasr al-Kabīr in 863 A.H/1459 A.D. and attacking Anfa in 869 A.H/1459 A.D. The Banū Marīn rulers culminated their rule while they were trying to liberate what the Portuguese occupied.



### **Relations with the Canary Islands.**

Since we are discussing relations with al-Andalus, we could mention the Sultan Abū 'Inān's plan to land in these Islands.

### **Confronting the Rebellious Movements.**

Among the most serious problems which the Banū Marīn rulers had to face was that of confronting the rebellious movements. They continuously tried to crush the movements of the Banū Hafs and of the Banū Yaghmurāsīn who did not hesitate to support all those in whose interest it was to prevent the Banū Marīn from maintaining their influence in al-Andalus such as the Castilians, the Aragonese and the Andalusians themselves.

The Banū Marīn rulers were busy in different fronts such as towards the east where they sometimes signed peace treaties or organised military expeditions in order to calm those who would otherwise have struck them from the back. There is a very touching letter sent by Ya'qūb to the Banū Yaghmurāsīn in which he states, « Until when will your ambitions and arrogance continue to grow... Is it not time to open your hearts to us and to end these evil deeds ? ».

Fortunately, some of the leaders sometimes asked themselves for what reasons and for whose interests they had struggled and combatted. However, they rapidly returned to their usual course. Consequently, the expansionist movement lasted for over half a century and this time the expansion was in the direction of Tunis in accordance with the counsel given by Yaghmurāsīn who died on his way : « If you desire to expand, do so eastwards and not at Morocco's expense. »

Many diplomatic missions were sent to avoid confrontation, but Abū Tāshafīn scorned the Moroccan attempts. It was in Tlemsan that the Sultan Abū-l-Hassan received different missions and letters. The challenge again presented itself during the reign of Sultan Abū Inān who also received congratulation from different parties while he was at Tlemsan. During the reign of Sultan Abū Sālim, confrontation with the rebels culminated in a peace treaty in 761 A.H / 1360 A.D. which was shortly interrupted the following year when Algeria interfered in Morocco's internal affairs. The question of liberating hostages was used as a pretext for mounting pressure on the Moroccans and bargaining with them and the real purpose of the Banū Yaghmurāsīn rulers was to receive diplomatic missions, to sign peace treaties and to create water clocks as the Banū Marīn rulers did in Morocco. Different parties contributed to interrupt the friendly relations that should have characterised the two neighbours and all efforts to save al-Andalus were defeated because their potential was wasted in their futile conflicts.

When we examine the relations of the Banū Marīn with Tunis, it becomes clear that the idea of unity was given priority by the Banū Marīn rulers over all

other options. For example, the early Banū Marīn rulers even mentioned the names of the Tunisian rulers in the Friday sermons which were read in the Moroccan mosques as a gesture of goodwill towards the Banū Hafs rulers and they sent them numerous diplomatic missions and letters.

The will which Yaghmurāsin left to his children while on his death bed in which he ordered them to expand at Tunis's expense rather than at Morocco's expense, is important to understand the real motivation behind Abū Tāshafīn's occupation of Tunis. This led the Banū Marīn rulers to react by sending their assistance to those who had suffered so much injustice after the Sultan Abū Sa'īd had exhausted all diplomatic efforts to convince Abū Tāshafīn that he should keep away from the capital of the Banū Hafs.

Upon Abū Bakr's restoration to power in Tunis, relations with Morocco improved greatly as is clear in the marriage of the Hafsī princess Fatima with Prince Abū l-Hassan 'Alī. Relations continued between the two nations as can be seen in their mutual participation in the battle to which the Moroccans were drawn to fight by the Tunisians and which was in fact the greatest battle they ever fought against the Spaniards.

These tight relations were renewed upon the death of Princess Fatima during the Battle of Tarif when the Tunisian Princess 'Azūna was received in the Moroccan court and this event greatly contributed to improve Morocco's friendly relations with the Tunisians.

It is equally normal to find the Sultan Abū l-Hassan rushing to rescue Tunis from a civil war in 748 A.H./1347 A.D following the unexpected death of his father-in-law the Sultan Abū Bakr. The day of his arrival has been described by Ibn Khaldūn as «the most memorable day such as we have never witnessed before». Even though this intervention may be considered as the Moroccan sovereign's duty, it shook the kings in the Middle East and in the Sudan. Had it not been for a treacherous act of betrayal and a sea storm which nearly cost the Sultan Abū l-Hassan his life, the history of Morocco would probably have been completely different from what it is.

The Sultan Abū 'Inān did not forget these events and in the year 758 A.H./1357 A.D., he promptly revenged his father's death and re-established Morocco's harmonious relations with Tunis. Only the petty conflicts between the ambitious princes of Tunis and Morocco's diplomatic efforts to serve as an intermediary between them served to freeze Moroccan-Tunisian relations. Consequently, Morocco was accused of expansionist aims by those who were able to occupy power in Tunis when the state of Banū Marīn was in full decline. It was in these circumstances that the Banū Hafs rulers attacked different regions in Morocco, and surrounded the city of Fez before they were able to reach an agreement and to sign a peace treaty with the Moroccans through the intermediary of a third party. This treaty was signed by the Moroccan Sultan Abū Sa'īd and the Tunisian Sultan Abū Fāris. It was also during this period that a diplomatic mission was sent to Tunis headed by Ibn Marzūq, the grandson, who responded to Abū Fāris' wish to listen to his lecture in the

presence of scholars and high state officials. The Moroccan ambassador gave his lecture and participated in a debate with the Tunisian scholars which impressed them greatly and he was thus able to establish his scholarly reputation in Tunis as well as that of Moroccan scholars generally.

Morocco's relations with Libya were equally close because the latter formed a second home for many Moroccans. It is important in this context to mention that had the Sultan Abū-'Inān not liberated Tripoli in 755 A.H/1354 A.D. from Genoa, Libya would probably be an Italian colony today.

#### **Relations with the Kings in the Mashriq.**

Unlike the period of the Muwahhidūn when relations with the Middle East were rather cautious and limited, the new conditions which developed in both the Maghrib and the Mashriq convinced the leaders in both areas to adopt a policy of cooperation and mutual assistance in matters of importance.

Consequently the King of Egypt sent the Moroccan sovereign a mission headed by Prince Qillig with the objective of playing an intermediary role between Morocco and the French kingdom concerning navigation in the Mediterranean Sea. This intermediary role was described as highly successful by the Egyptian ambassador.

A new age therefore began which was characterised by close contact and mutual assistance as is reflected for example in the Moroccan mission sent to Egypt in 700 A.H/1301 A.D. which was accompanied by five hundred horsemen and has been described in detail by al-Qādī Ibn Zaghbūsh. Still another mission was sent the following year headed by Ay Dūghdī which returned in the company of the Sharīf of Mecca who went on a tour of the Moroccan provinces before returning to his country where the *Ashrāf* (pl. of sharīf) of Mecca issued a *bay'a* (or declaration of allegiance) to the Moroccan sovereign Abu Ya'qub.

The King an-Nāsir responded to the Moroccan ambassadors by sending a mission in 607 A.H/1306 A.D. bearing presents from the King to the Moroccan Sultan including booty that had been obtained from the Tatars who organized military attacks against Egypt.

Morocco's contact with the Mashriq continued throughout the reign of the Sultan Abū Sa'īd I (710-731 A.H/1311-1330 A.D.) when entire families immigrated from the Middle East to Morocco. It was also during this period that a rather unique Moroccan phenomenon developed when the Sultan bought plots of land in the Middle East and built sanctuaries in that region in order to furnish the required defensive measures against foreign aggression directed against the Islamic fortresses.

In response to a mission from Egypt headed by the minister Ibn al-Jarrāh, another Moroccan mission headed by Ibn Wardār was sent in 737 A.H/1315 A.D. bearing a letter to the King of Egypt concerning the Moroccan sovereign's action aimed at unifying Muslims with the objective of liberating Gibraltar. The



Moroccan mission returned accompanied by another mission from Egypt bearing a sealed letter to the Moroccan King expressing the Egyptians' readiness to participate in any effort to counter the Christian Crusade and to liberate the mentioned Islamic forteess.

Morocco sent a new mission in 738 A.H/1337 A.D. bearing precious gifts which greatly impressed all who saw them to use Ibn-Khaldūn's term. This mission also carried a long letter to the King an-Nāsir to which the Egyptian King answered in a letter the entire content of which has been preserved in Arabic sources and in which he expressed his great care and attention for the Princess' mission which was headed by Princess Lalla Maryam who was preferred to her other sisters and brothers by her father the Moroccan sovereign. The King an-Nāsir responded to this mission by sending another historical mission bearing all kinds of precious and rare gifts which greatly impressed all those who saw them.

The dynamic activities of the Kingdom of Morocco in Al-Andalus particularly those concerning the interactions between Alfonso XI and the Sultan Abū-l-Hassan formed the object of the correspondence exchanged between the court of Fez and the court of Egypt and Syria. Consequently, we find a Moroccan diplomatic mission in Egypt in 745 A.H/1744 A.D. headed by Ibn-Abū-Madīn which bore a letter to the King as-Sālih related to the naval battle which ended with the surrender of Algeciras. This letter also discusses the preparations for the coming round, to which the King of Egypt answered immediately stressing that war is the only option left and that the Moroccan sovereign's determination would surely lead him to victory in the coming battle.

Another Moroccan mission was sent in 756 A.H/1355 A.D. headed by the Qādī al-Burjī and Morocco soon received a mission from the Sultan al-Ashraf asking for assistance following the attack by Cyprus on the port of Alexandria in 767 A.H/1365 A.D. Another illustration of the close ties between Morocco and Egypt was the presence of Ibrāhīm al-Tazī in Egypt where he was in charge of Egyptian industries and participated in Egypt's confrontation with the Gypriots.

The King of Granada congratulated his ally the King of Morocco just as the other had done on other occasions and the Granadan letter of congratulations opened with the following phrase, « In revenge of the attack on Alexandria ».

In 793 A.H/1391 A.D. Ibn-Khaldūn presented the Moroccan envoy Ibn-Ghānim to the King adh-Dhāhir Barqāq I and the Moroccan ambassador presented the Egyptian kings with gifts from Morocco.

The attacks of the Tartars against Syria during the end of the eighth century A.H was an appropriate occasion for stressing the solidarity of the different parts of the Islamic world. In 796 A.H/1394 A.D. Ibn-Khaldūn himself contacted Tamerlane and conducted negotiations with him concerning the liberation of the inhabitants of Damascus, as is clear from a letter sent by the Maghribī historian to the Moroccan ruler Abū Sa'īd II. In 804 A.H/1402 A.D. a diplomatic mission was sent to the Mashriq headed by Shaykh al-Jawād al-'Irāqī who car-



بِلَهِّهِ وَرَدَّ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى الشَّيْءَ عَلَى سَمْعِهِ : وَأَيُّدَانَهُمَا بِهِ تَدْلِيهِ فَمَلَّ الشَّيْءُ فَرَجَعَهُ : مَرَجَلَهُ الْكَلِمَ  
 وَمَنْعَهُ وَرَفَعَهُ : كَتَابَ كَرِيمٍ نَسَبَهُ : بَحْنِيمُ أَدَبُهُ : عَلَى قَصْبِهِ : مَلَقُ إِذَا أَخْلَى التَّحَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ :  
 مَسِيَّ شَيْءٍ إِلَى بَيْتِ اللَّهِ وَحَمِيَّ رِسُولَهُ الْغِيَا مَرْتَبَهُ : عَلَى يَدِ رِسُولِهِ الشَّيْخُ الْأَمِيرُ الْأَزْكَرُ الْأَزْجَرُ  
 الْأَذْفَى الْخَكِيمُ الْبَلِغُ : الْمُرْتَمِزُ الْبَعِيرُ لِدَسْخَانِ أَبِي الشَّيْخِ الطَّلَحِ لِيَدِ زَيْنِ عِبْرَةِ الْحَمْدِ  
 أَبِي لِيَدِ بَحْنِيمٍ : نَعِيَ اللَّهُ بِهِ : وَحَاجِبِهِ الْكَيْسُ الْفَخْتَارُ : الْقَهْقَرِيُّ : الْأَعْمَى : لِيَدِ زَيْنِ عَمِيهِ  
 أَبِي الشَّيْخِ الْهَيَّوْمِ الْوَكِيلِ : إِذَا أَدْرَكَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى : وَكَأَنَّهُ لَمْ يَجْعَلْ الْأَشْعَرُ لِيَدِ الْوَصْلِ أَبِي الْقَيْسِ  
 الْقَتَنِ لِيَدِ عَمْرِو اللَّهِ : بَرَاءُ مَرْيَمَ : وَقَعَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَمَرْوَى : وَمَنْعَهُمْ مِنْ الْخَالَةِ وَالْهَيْمَاءِ  
 وَالْقِيَامِ الْإِلَهِيِّ فِي خِزْمَةِ الْحَقِّقَةِ الْإِصْوَافَةِ بَلَّغَهُ اللَّهُ أَرْبَعًا : وَقِيلَ فِي هَذَا : التَّوَالِيَّةُ  
 بِرَبِّكَ الْبَارِئِ الْوَرَّاحِ وَالْقَرِي : الْمَعَانِ عَلَى الْكَمَالِ فِي فَرْجِ الْحَجِّ الْقُدُّوسِ : الْقَوْلُ لِيَدِ الْبَحْرِ الْعَفْصِيِّ  
 كَمَا حَبَّرَ الْبَحْرُ : بَعْضُ خُصْمَتِهِ الزُّكِّي : وَأَوْضَعْنَا فِي حَرْثِ قُتَيْبٍ : الزُّكِّي : وَغَمَّ نَسْلُهُ  
 بِحَضْرَتِهِ رَوْضًا يَدْنُغُ الْوَرْدَ مِنْ بَحْنِيمٍ : وَحَضْرَتُهُ خَوَانِدًا عَلَى إِعَانَةِ خَالَتِهِ وَفِي رَوْضَاتِهِمْ  
 عَلَى قَضَاءِ السُّلْطَانِ بَزْلًا الْحَمِيَّ الْمَكِّيَّ وَتَلَحُّنًا بِصَوْلِهِ الْيَمِينُوتِ : فَإِذَا هِيَ مَقْصُورَاتٌ عَلَى قُتَيْبٍ  
 مَحْضَةٍ : وَرَغَبَاتٌ قُودِيَّ مِي الْحَجِّ مَرْتَبَهُ : وَمَعْبَرَاتٌ يَدُ الْبَحْرِ مِي يَصْلُحُ الْعَبْدُ الْحَمِيَّ  
 وَوَقِيهِ مَرْتَبَهُ : وَفِي هَذِهِ يَجْعَلُهَا يَوْمَ فَيْلَاحِ الْأَشْهُادِ قُتَيْبٍ وَحَشِيَّ وَغَمَّ نَسْلُهُ :

This is the answer of the King of Egypt to the letter he received from the Moroccan monarch who had sent Princess Lalla Maryam for the Hāj in the year 738 A.H./1337 A.D. The princess was accompanied among others, by the Shaykh Abū Ishaq Ibrāhīm Abū Yahyā at-Tazī.

ried a letter which is still preserved today. The purpose of this mission was to express Morocco's determination to offer effective assistance against any attack by the Tatars in Syria. We ignore the author of the Moroccan letter, but we do know that an-Nāsir's answer to his letter was written by al-Qalqashandī. Just as there were positive effects of the competition between the Muwahhidūn and the 'Abbāsīs in Morocco, so the continuous diplomatic contact between the kings of Egypt and the Banū Marīn rulers had a positive effect on cultural and intellectual life in Fez. For example the water clocks of Fez resembled those of Damascus and the social life in Morocco and Syria resembled each other in numerous respects as is reflected in numerous travel accounts.

#### **Relations with the Mediterranean Republics.**

Morocco's continuously good relations with its neighbours in the Mediterranean Sea were often expressed by offering them assistance in the most crucial moments. For example, a diplomatic mission was sent from Genoa to the court of Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb in 692 A.H/1293 A.D. bearing a rather rare present which consisted of a tree with golden branches carrying birds. The Sultan Abū-'Inān signed a treaty with the Republic of Pisa in 752 A.H/1358 A.D. which consisted of fourteen parts and included all the different aspects which would contribute to the peaceful relations between the two states. The Sultan Abu Sa'īd sent the crown of Aragon assistance with the object of defending Sardinia and Corsica and the Queen Dona Leonor asked the Sultan Abū 'Inān to sign a peace treaty with her brother the ruler of Sicily. The Moroccan ruler's answer to the queen is still preserved today.

#### **Relations with the Kings of France.**

France was among the Mediterranean states which had good relations with Morocco. It is appropriate in this context to mention a historical letter sent by the Moroccan sovereign Abū Yūsuf to Philip Lehardie in 681 A.H/1282 A.D. discussing current affairs. These relations were among the best that Morocco has had with any other state and they reflect the fact that the Moroccans were fully aware of the divisions of the European kingdoms and their repercussions in the Maghrib. These contacts between the French and the Moroccans inaugurated a new period of cooperation and mutual assistance and this spirit is clearly reflected in the correspondence which was sent to Morocco from Southern France and which led to the signing of a peace treaty in 739 A.H/1339 A.D. This treaty was written on deerskin and the original copy which is still preserved today is considered as one of the oldest manuscripts of its kind.

### Relations with the Holy See.

The cordial relations with the Holy See during the period of the Muwahhidūn was continued during the period of the Banū Marīn. In 693 A.H/1293 A.D. King Edward of England sent the Sultan Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb a mission with the objective of examining matters of mutual interest. Furthermore, the Banū Marīn rulers continued to maintain their good relations with the Holy See as is reflected in the letters sent by Pope Nicholas IV to Yūsuf b. Ya'qūb.

### Relations with the African Kingdoms.

The Banū Marīn rulers also had excellent relations with the African Kingdoms in the Soudan just as their predecessors had had. This is clearly reflected in the many documents, records, letters and missions relating to his subject. For example the court of Banū Marīn rulers received many missions from the African Kingdoms such as the one received by Abū-l-Hassan following the liberation of Tlemsan. This mission was sent by the Sultan of Mali Mansa Musa in Ramadan 737 A.H/1338 A.D. congratulating him and renewing the peaceful relations between the two countries. The members of this mission returned to their countries carrying loads of presents accompanied by a Moroccan mission which was headed by Abū Tālib.

Mansa Sulayman continued the path which had been traced by his ancestor Mūsa when he renewed his contact and relations with Morocco by sending a mission headed by Hāj al-Wanjratī according to the historian Ibn-Jazī. There is also another mission sent by the Sultan Diata to the Sultan Abū Sālim in 762 A.H/1360 A.D. when the sovereign sat to receive the members of the mission at Borj adh-Dhahab on an occasion which has impressed such historians as Ibn-Khaldūn and Ibn-Zumruk.

### Relations with the Early Ottomans.

The Banū Marīn rulers were not unaware of the developments in Asia since they sent regular missions to that area and they were fully informed of the conditions in that part of the world. Ibn Khaldūn has described the Tatars and Ibn Battūta has presented us with a travel account of that area which was widely read. Consequently, the Moroccans were informed of the advance of the Tatars towards Constantinople despite their decline during the end of the Banū Marīn period. Indeed, a Moroccan diplomatic mission was sent to the Ottoman capital in the end of 857 A.H/1453 A.D. with the objective of congratulating the Sultan Muḥamad al-Fātih upon his establishment as the sultan. It is important to observe that the Moroccans must have hoped that this mission would obtain Ottoman assistance at a time when Castile and Portugal attacked Morocco regularly. The period of Banū Marīn constituted one of the most brilliant phases in the international history of Morocco.

### **The Banū Wattās and their State.**

- Relations with Spain
- Relations with Portugal
- The Battle of Wādī-l-Makhāzin
- Relations with Constantinople
- Relations with Africa
- Relations with France



Despite the short period during which the Banū Wattās ruled, they continued to pursue their efforts to recover those territories which had been occupied and to counter the dangers which threatened the nation as a result of the international conspiracy against Morocco.

#### **Relations with Spain and Portugal.**

The unification of Castile and Aragon produced a unified Spain. In 897 A.H./1492 A.D Granada fell in Christian hands and its inhabitants fled to Morocco. The latter were followed by Spain to Morocco and as a result, Spain occupied several Moroccan fortresses on the Mediterranean and on the Atlantic coasts. The Treaty of Alcaçovas on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 1479 put an end to the differences between Spain and Portugal which opened the way to distribution of booty. The Treaty of Tordesillas on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1494 divided Morocco into areas of Spanish interest and areas of Portuguese interest. The Pope prayed for the success of the crusade organised by Ferdinand and Isabella. Several other fortresses fell prior to the Treaty of Cintra on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 1509 before King Emmanuel I informed the Pope Leo X that they had planned a crusade that would lead them to Fez, the first Islamic capital of Morocco.

It took the Moroccans three fourths of a century of warfare to recover their occupied territories. All this time they defended themselves with cannons, swords, and even bee hives when no other weapon was available. When they failed to obtain their immediate objectives by force, they relied on diplomatic means until they had prepared themselves for the following round.

Thousands of victims were left behind on the battlefields in the outskirts of every city, hundreds of ships were sunk or wrecked in the high seas while others were swallowed by fires. Yet in spite of these endless difficulties, hundreds of political letters and ambassadors were sent by the Moroccans to other nations and the Moroccan rulers received just as many letters and missions.

The opponents thought that they would exploit the differences between the Moroccan leaders following the creation of a kingdom in Northern Morocco and another one in the South but they were fully disappointed to learn that despite their differences both parties were fully conscious of their need to combat any foreign invasion.

### **The First « Battle of Wādī-l-Makhāzin ».**

Muhammad ash-Shaykh was the first to sign a peace treaty with Alfonso V at Asila in 876 A.H/1471 A.D., but the Portuguese soon broke this treaty and were consequently faced with a ferocious resistance and finally forced to ask for a truce in 894 A.H/1489 A.D. following the great historical event when the Banū Wattās rulers surrounded the Portuguese fleet « by sea and by river » after an important number of soldiers had descended from the ships in order to build a tower in the island known by the name of Graciosa. They crossed the Lukos River bearing loads of rocks which were placed in bamboo baskets and thrown into the depths of the river according to Arabic sources, such as al-Kurrāsī's work, as well as Portuguese sources. This battle was indeed a prelude to the Battle of the Three Kings.

Several treaties were signed in 932 A.H/1526 A.D., in 940 A.H/1534 A.D. and in 945 A.H/1539 A.D. Furthermore, the Kingdom in northern Morocco maintained peaceful relations with Portugal whenever it was at war with the Southern kingdom. On the other hand, the latter also signed peace treaties with Portugal in 929 A.H/1523 A.D., in 932 A.H/1526 A.D. and in 963 A.D/1537 A.D. The different parties knew the real nature of their enemies, but each one tried to gain time hoping for a better fortune to come.

Besides the kingdoms of Fez and Marrakesh, several ports of Morocco were occupied such as Safi, Azemour, El-Jadida, Agadir and Māssa. Each of these ports had frontiers which were the cause of problems with the neighbouring regions. These conflicts often led to negotiations. It is equally important to ask the question concerning the relations of the occupied cities with the Portuguese crown. In spite of the terrible repression, many protest manifestations were organised. They demanded that inquiry commissions (*inquiração*) be sent to examine the injustices to which they were subjected. They also threatened the Portuguese in case their demands were not met, to seek the assistance of the King of Fez or Marrakesh. Consequently, there were missions, protests and rebellions. In fact, the situation of the Portuguese in Morocco was rather delicate and extremely difficult despite the appearance of the contrary. These problems greatly concerned the Banū Wattās rulers which explains their extremely flexible policy vis-à-vis the greatest empire of the time.

### **Relations with Constantinople**

Another important event during this period at the international level was the treaty signed between François I and the Ottoman Emperor in 992 A.H/1526 A.D. as means of pressuring Spain. This left Morocco in a difficult position because it shared its frontiers with both Spain and the Ottoman Empire. Moroc-



*This is a letter from the Sultan Muhammad ash-Shaykh to the Portuguese monarch dated on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of Jumada I 920 A.H/15<sup>th</sup> of July 1514 A.D. in which he informed him of his intention to send part of his Moroccan fleet to Algeria and to Tunisia and he asked him to order his pirates not to attack the Moroccan ships.*

co decided to maintain a neutral position. This situation was among the most delicate that the Moroccan diplomats have ever had to confront. On the other hand, Morocco succeeded in preserving its good relations with the Ottoman Empire and helped Algeria and Tunisia which were part of the Ottoman Empire, in spite of difficult developments.

In spite of the delicate international situation, the Banū Wattās rulers did not forget their brothers when they sent Ibn al Azraq to Cay Tabay and Ibn al-Wazzān (Leo the African) to Sultan Selīm.

The Banū Wattās rulers asked the Governor of Egypt to intervene in favour of the Moroccan businessmen who were attacked by the Catalans in 925 A.H/1519 A.D. The Banū Wattās rulers further expressed their good intentions by recognising the sovereignty of the Ottoman rulers and the Friday sermons were read in their name in all the mosques in Morocco. They further issued coins bearing the names of the Ottoman caliphs as the Murābitūn had done with the 'Abbāsīs with the hope of receiving their assistance and this has been confirmed in al-Zayānī's *At-Turgumān al-Mucrib*.

#### **Relations with Africa, France and Spain**

Although the Banū Wattās rulers failed to maintain their contact with their African friends, particularly with the Kingdom of Songhay, they received a mission from François I, the King of France, headed by Pierre de Piton in 939 A.H/1532 A.D. thus renewing the old relations with France and opening new prospects for the future.

Diplomatic struggles characterised the reign of the Banū Wattās dynasty, but these relations also had a cultural character. For example, the cultural relations between Morocco and the Iberian Peninsula became stronger when the capital of Banū Wattās welcomed an important foreign community which included diplomats, craftsmen and scholars. Relations were further strengthened between the Moroccans and the Andalusians as a result of intermarriage between them which was never interrupted.



## **The Sa'diyyūn and their State**

- Relations with the Ottoman Empire
- Relations with England
- Relations with the Portuguese Empire
- Relations with Spain
- Relations with France
- Relations with Holland
- Relations with Persia
- Relations with the African Kingdoms .
- External Relations during the period of  
Abū-Raḡraq Republics

With the establishment of the Sa'diyyūn, Morocco was transformed into an area that attracted the interest of the world as a great power of the time in the Maghrib and in the Mashriq, particularly after the Moroccan army was able in a matter of days, to defeat the entire army of the Portuguese who constituted the greatest empire in the world. They killed its King Don Sebastian and captured thousands of prisoners.

#### **Relations with the Ottoman Empire**

In the eastern frontiers, the Sa'diyyūn had to confront the Ottoman Empire which became the most powerful state in the world and which expected the Sa'diyyūn to adopt the same policy towards the Ottoman rulers that the Banū Wattās rulers had previously adopted, that is, to read the Friday sermons in their name in Moroccan mosques. The Sa'diyyūn also had to face the expansionist policy which Spain inherited from Portugal. They further had to impose their authority in West Africa in order to defend this important strategic area from any foreign intervention. Finally, they had to carefully evaluate the constantly changing positions of different kingdoms vis-à-vis other parties in the context of the international developments which were dominated by the « super powers ».

A general evaluation of the relations of the Sa'diyyūn with the Ottoman rulers is sufficient to indicate the numerous difficulties and obstacles which faced the Moroccan rulers, because their policies differed from those of the Ottomans in their ideology and in their objectives. Morocco tried every possible means to check the ambitions of the Algerian Turks and successfully unveiled the intrigues which were carefully plotted against the Moroccan rulers. Consequently, the Sultan Sulaymān al-Qānūnī (the Just), Selīm II and Murāt III all failed in their efforts to bring Morocco to its knees. These Sultans and those who followed them were all finally convinced that Morocco was fully aware of their plots and of international developments generally.

The Sa'diyyūn had always recognised that their neighbour was a province of the Ottoman Empire which was aimed at confronting the enemies of Islam. They were equally aware that they were in a position to contribute to the realization of this objective. However, they also knew of the alliance between the Ottoman rulers and the French which was aimed at pressuring Castile. Consequently, Morocco was in an advantageous bargaining position because each side sought to convince Morocco to join it against the other. This was the main cause

which drove the Ottoman rulers to attempt to put an end to Moroccan sovereignty and which also contributed to encourage the Spaniards to occupy Moroccan fortresses. Yet the Sa'diyyūn proved their genius when they successfully confronted these expansionist policies and were able to defend the nation's unity and its values. Hundreds of letters and dozens of missions were exchanged between the Moroccan and the Ottoman rulers, but not one single treaty was signed between the two countries. This confirms that the Sa'diyyūn had not forgotten the Ottoman role in the murder of the founder of their dynasty Muhammad ash-Shaykh and in sending his head to the Ottoman capital when he refused to submit to Sulaymān al-Qānūnī's demands. Yet in spite of that it is equally important to note that not one treaty was signed by the Moroccans with other parties in order to threaten Ottoman interests which is another dimension of the ethics characterising Moroccan diplomacy. The Sa'diyyūn never went beyond threatening the Ottomans or conspiring against them with the sole objective of showing them that Morocco had always existed as an independent and sovereign entity over centuries and would remain so in the future. Historical sources also reflect the fear of the Sublime Porte from the «Emperor» in Europe and also from the «Sharīf» in Africa. This is a reality which is illustrative of Morocco's international stature and it is important in this context to point out an-Nahrawālī's publication in honour of Abū-'Abd-Allāh al-Ghālīb bi-Allāh.

#### **Relations with England.**

Morocco's diplomatic relations with England were important during this period and they represent the continuity of the long history of close ties between the two nations, particularly during the reign of Elizabeth I. Anyone reading the letters exchanged between the two countries during this period and the treaties which were signed (1583) will be astonished and amazed. For example, Morocco helped England establish the Barbary Company, Moroccan sugar dominated the world market and Morocco accepted to grant the English financial loans and material as well as military assistance for supporting the liberation movements which sought to restore legal rulers to power. The Moroccan-English alliance was aimed at dominating the Spanish possessions in the East and West Indies after their centres in West Africa had been threatened.

England was greatly impressed by Ahmad al-Mansūr's ambitions, but it limited its alliance with him in order to triumph over its short term enemies. Contact between the courts continued to the end of the period of the Sa'diyyūn who exchanged falcons with King Charles I.

#### **Relations with the Portuguese Empire.**

England's efforts to create closer ties with Morocco were not accidental but rather a result of the international political developments which had demonstrated Morocco's real potential. Other nations had observed the Ashraf as-Sa'diyyūn

هذا الكتاب الكريم والمدرج الجسيم صدر عن اللقمان العلي الامير  
 المولوي الهاشمي الحسن المنصور دام اقبال دولته ولا زالت جهات الشيطان  
 مشرقة بانوار معقلته الى الاموال التي لها في الاقطار النصرانية القدر الشامخ  
 المكان والعز البارز الثالث الكركاز والمكانة التي يترى لها من اهل مالها القام  
 والدان امواله السلطنة الالهيه المجتهدة المشيلة الانبيكة الالهية الخطيرة الشهيرة  
 السلطنة ازيل لا زال قدرها في الملل النصرانية عزيز الجناح سوام الضباب امه  
 فعلمنا هذا اليك من حصة من اكشتر حاطها الله ومنع الله تعالى منصل المرام  
 من هرا الاعوان والاشهاد لله الهه هذا والذي ارجته لمكانك المكن انه يرد على مراكبه  
 خد لنا حكمة هذا الكتاب الكريم الذي وجهنا هم الى جلب لقضاء مصر حازنا وماغ من  
 اغراضنا وقل اخترنا لهم ان يكون موزونهم على بلادك للمخبة التي بيننا وبينك والصلوة  
 التي تقرت بيننا وجنا بك وحملناهم على ان يطلب الكرم الى ماكانك المكن  
 بحب ان تستوصوا بهم خير اخسنا في طلوهم مع سقر يلاذك الى تلك الحصة  
 لهم اهل السفور يستلزموا منهم ويعتبرهم لوصاتك في جميع احوالهم كما يزيد منكم  
 ايضا ان تعطوهم حنايك في ايديهم التي تجار بلادك الذين يسافرون الى تلك الجهة بانوا  
 رجعت كذا السفر التي يطلعون فيها من قبل ان يستوفوا اغراضهم كل من وجد له  
 فاما لا من سفر جارا لادهم محمولهم حتى يبلغهم الى ميكننا الشريفه ان شاء الله تعالى  
 عليهم قد اك كل اخذ الاصل على نحو ما هو الاظن بمكانك المكن واعلم ان انباء  
 الفلمندى الذي رتب فيهم لعل مقامنا وكانوا في اشرا ما هم يصلونكم محبة خد  
 وعد امتنا عليهم لاجل رعيتك ورعاية جنابك ثم ان جميع ما يكون لكم من الاعراض  
 في بلادنا وفي مما لكنا الشريعة وتحمل شانه بعلي مقامنا فهو موقفي ومتلف عندنا  
 القبول والاقتبال والرعي والامتثال المحبة وال صداقة التي بيننا وبينكم وهذا واجب  
 الكتاب اليكم في ثاني عشر رمضان المعظم من عام ثمانية و الف

This is a most serious letter from the Sultan Ahmad al-Mansūr adh-Dhahabī to Queen Elizabeth the First concerning the organisation of an operation whereby a fleet would be sent to the East Indies and to the West Indies with the object of striking at Spanish interests in that area. The letter was dated on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan 1008 A.H/17<sup>th</sup> March 1601 A.D.



when they departed from southern Morocco throwing the foreign invaders into the sea, and confronting the Portuguese Empire which had sent Don Sebastian and all his army and mercenaries from many different nations. The Moroccan rulers were able to avenge their defeat at the hands of the Portuguese when they triumphed at the great Battle of Wādī-l-Makhāzin in 986 A.H/1578 A.D. which had resulted, as stated earlier, in the Portuguese defeat and in Don Sebastian's death. Following the battle, members of the noble Portuguese families carried church bells on their backs which were used to decorate mosques in Fez. This battle has attracted the interest of scholars from numerous parts of the world and its echo was great among all those who were in one way or another related to Lisbon, including those in the Indian sub-continent and the area of the Arab Gulf. Don Sebastian was accompanied by people from all parts including those who spoke Arabic whom he hoped to rely on as interpreters once they had conquered Morocco, but ironically, these same people were among the members of the mission which came to Morocco in order to ask for Don Sebastian's corpse in return for a large sum of money which the Moroccan sovereign graciously declined. The Battle of Wādī-l-Makhāzin consequently greatly contributed to enhance Morocco's reputation as a prestigious nation among other nations which were directly or indirectly concerned by the results of this important battle. The many letters which have been written on this battle confirm the fact that the victory at Wādī-l-Makhāzin was not, as some would have it, an accident but rather a battle that was carefully planned and timed. Indeed, it was Portugal's attack against Morocco that was in fact an unhappy adventure.

#### Relations with Spain.

An examination of Morocco's relations with Spain during the period of the Sa'diyyūn will illustrate another fact of the diplomatic struggle which characterised this period. After their disappointing experience with the Ottoman rulers, the Sa'diyyūn found that they had to confront another powerful neighbour Spain. They had to decide between forming an alliance with Spain again against their Muslim brothers or renouncing their dependence in favour of the Ottoman rulers who formed an alliance with France as a means of isolating Spain and threatening its interests. The Sa'diyyūn ably managed to maintain cordial normal relations with Castile without breaking their relations with the Sublime Porte and without engaging in an unnecessary and destructive war with the Spaniards. The Moroccans exploited their strategic advantage. In short, they tried to defend Morocco's best interests. For example, an examination of the way they convinced the Spaniards to trade Larache for El-Jadida clearly reflects the sophisticated level of Moroccan diplomacy. Another example of Morocco's diplomatic ability during this period is reflected in Morocco's position following the incident with the « invincible fleet » which indicates how they struggled internally to liberate Sebta and externally with the objective of liberating

al-Andalus. Thousands of documents attest to the supremacy of the Sa'diyyūn in the diplomatic field as a result of their great flexibility because they followed the development of international events carefully and always benefited from their strategy which was carefully studied and executed basically through a secret code system which only the parties involved could decipher.

#### **Relations with France.**

Morocco's relations with France illustrate the former's deep self confidence and its rejection of all forms of foreign domination. Treaties were signed with France such as the treaty of 1635 and letters and diplomatic missions were exchanged between the Kings of the two nations during the period of the Sa'diyyūn. The original copies of the letters which were sent to Charles IX and letters sent by Henry III and Henry IV to the Moroccan sultans are still preserved in the European archives. It was also during this period that Mulāy Zaydān's library was stolen which led to the immediate diplomatic intervention of the Moroccans who contacted France among other nations such as Holland and the Ottoman Empire.

#### **Relations with Holland.**

Morocco's relations with Holland during this period started late during the reign of al-Mansūr as-Sa'dī when Holland gained its independence from Spain, but these relations were among the closest that Morocco had with any nation. The Dutch were extremely grateful to receive generous loans from Morocco with the object of building a solid future. The treaty of 1019 A.H/1610 A.D was greatly beneficial to the Dutch and the name of the port of *al-Walīdiyya* in Morocco symbolises the Dutch presence and Moroccan-Spanish ties. The Morocco capital, of Marrakesh welcomed a Dutch mission 1050 A.H/ 1641 A.D. headed by Liedēkerke which had important repercussions at all levels including the political, literary and artistic levels.

The Hague also received a Moroccan mission which has been reproduced in beautiful paintings which are still to be found in museums. Even when Morocco experienced very difficult times as when the country was divided into numerous independent entities some of which included three governments within one square mile each with its ruler, ministers and ambassadors, Holland continued to maintain its close relations with the central authorities by sending letters and missions regularly.

#### **Relations with Persia.**

Morocco's external relations reached as far as Persia. The Shāh 'Abbās the Great sent a mission to the Sa'diyyūn asking for assistance against the rebellious

Turks who organised military attacks against Persia. The Persians were fully aware that they could not solve this problem without the assistance of the Moroccans. They were fully aware of the correspondence between the Shi'a rulers of Persia and the Sunnī Ottoman rulers and of al-Mansūr as-Sa'dī's answer concerning this issue.

#### **Relations with the Kingdoms of West Africa.**

The Sa'diyyūn were equally concerned with their need to maintain good relations with West Africa. In this context, a large number of African missions from neighbouring nations were to be found in the court of al-Mansūr-as-Sa'dī. Besides those missions, the Moroccans participated in an event in that area that may be considered as an extension of the Battle of Wādī-l-Makhāzin.

On the one hand, the Spaniards extended their influence to West Africa and tried to put an end to all their spiritual values which had been previously introduced by the Moroccans to the local inhabitants, and on the other, the Spaniards tried to weaken Morocco economically. Yet despite these developments, the Ottoman rulers continued to support al-Mansūr's allies in that area with the object of arousing their hatred and fear of the Moroccan sovereign. Al-Mansūr was thus led to move his army southwards and to unite those kingdoms under a single flag. This enabled him to strike Spain's economic interests in India as a prelude to his liberation of the Andalusian cities. This is clearly reflected in his correspondence.

#### **External Relations during the Period of the Abū-Raqqāq Republics**

The foreigners who lived during the end of the period of the Sa'diyyūn, particularly during the reign of Mawlāy Zaydān, were fully aware of the appearance in Morocco of independent political entities, particularly on the banks of the Abū Raqqāq River. They were characterised by a form of government which has rightly been called the « diwān » and was perhaps referred to as a republic.

Rabat and its fortresses<sup>(2)</sup> became overcrowded with the Moriscos and when the Sultan Zaydān asked them for their assistance against al-'Ayyāshī, they refused to offer any contribution and rebelled against him. They nominated a

(2) Rabat and the *qasaba* formed part of Salé prior to the arrival of the Moriscos. It was called *rihāt Salā* and *Qasabat Salā* before the three cities were called the cities of Salé (*Mudun Salā*). The present Salé was sometimes referred to as the Old Salé and Rabat as the New Salé. The *Qasaba* continued to form part of Salé until it became known as *Qasabat al-Widāya* during the period of the Sultan Mawlāy 'Abd-ar-Rahmān b. Hishām and Rabat recovered its old name of *Rihāt al-Fath* by which it was known during the period of the Murābiṭūn.



وَحَمْدُ اللَّهِ عَلَى سَائِرِ مَا نَحْمَدُهُ وَالَّذِي وَصَّيْنَا

*This is one of the hundreds of letters which were exchanged between Ahmad al-Mansūr adh-Dhahabī and the princes of West Africa. It was sent to Prince Muhammad Bānī Ibn Dāwūd Ibn al-Hāj Muhammad Askiya who died on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April, 1588. This letter was an answer to another letter which the Moroccan monarch had sent with his ambassador Mas'ūd al-Wahrānī. Muhammad Bānī was also opposed to the Ottoman presence in the area.*



governor in Rabat who was responsible to a «parliament» that was elected over a specific period of time. The first *diwān* or republic of the Moriscos was in Rabat. The second *diwān* was established at the *qasaba* by the Hornacheros (*Harnāshyyūn*)<sup>(3)</sup>

The republics initially had close ties with the government of ash-Shaykh al-'Ayyāshī while they maintained their autonomy, but they went further and collaborated with Spain, which occupied *al-Ma'mūra*, against al-'Ayyāshī. The latter obtained a decree or *fatwa* from the '*ulamā*' such as ash-Shaykh al-'Arabī al-Fāsi and ash-Shaykh 'Abd-al-Wāhid b. 'Ashir, condemning the collaborators with the Spaniards. The *Dallāṭyyūn* tried to defend the Moriscos, but Shaykh al-'Ayyāshī rejected their intermediary, and this led to his death for which the Spaniards rejoiced. This also led to the formation of a third *diwān* or republic at the city of Salé in spite of its small size. A fourth *diwān* was established at Tetuan.

However, the autonomous governments known as *diwān* soon fell to the Moroccan central government which was able to dominate the northern part of Morocco during the reign of Mawlāy Muhammad b. Mawlāy ash-Shārif (Muhammad I) during the period of the 'Alawiyyūn.

(3) The *Harnāshyyūn* were originally from a small city South-East of Mérida.

## **The 'Alawiyyūn and their State**

- Relations with the Ottoman Turks in Algeria
- Relations with the Sublime Porte
- Relations with Britain
- Relations with Holland
- Relations with the Holy See and the Mediterranean Republics
- Relations with the United States of America
- Relations with Central and South America
- Relations with Russia
- Relations with the Scandinavian Countries
- Relations with Austria
- Relations with Hamburg
- Relations with Belgium
- Relations with the Mashriq (Middle East)
- Relations with the Kingdom of West Africa
- Relations with Portugal
- Relations with Spain
- Relations with France
- The French Protectorate and National Resistance
- King Muhammad V and Moroccan Independence
- Morocco during the Post-Independence Period

When the 'Alawiyyūn acquired power, and established their rule, Morocco was divided into seven or ten parts. There were the remains of the state of the Sa'diyyūn, the emirate of the Dallāiyyūn, the emirate of Marrakesh, the emirate of Illigh, the emirate of the Rif, as well the different areas occupied by the Ottomans, the English, the Spaniards and the Portuguese.

#### **Relations with the Ottoman Turks in Algeria.**

Sultan Muhammad the First's contact with the exterior was through the correspondence and missions he exchanged with the Ottoman rulers of Algeria before the 'Alawiyyūn had established their relations with the central authorities at the great city of Constantinople. This contact reflects Morocco's diplomatic skills because it was meant to block the ambitions that the Turks in Algeria may have had and to contain any expansionist plans they may have entertained to occupy Morocco. On the other hand, the Moroccan diplomats expressed their full support to the Sublime Porte against the hostile European states, which enabled them to have secure frontiers while continuing their traditional relations with their brothers in Islam.

The moral and material assistance which the Ottoman sultans received from Morocco through the Mediterranean is fully documented in the archives of the libraries at Istanbul. Yet the European and American records and documents are also full of information on the echo of this assistance. They all illustrate that Morocco's foreign policy was able to build a bridge that connected Morocco directly with the Sublime Porte.

However, it must be observed that Morocco has always refrained from accepting a permanent Ottoman diplomatic mission or consulate in the Kingdom of Morocco on the basis that the brotherhood of the two nations did not need to be strengthened by Ottoman missions in Morocco. The real reason for this position, however, is that the Ottoman Turks in Algeria had never respected their Moroccan neighbours and sought any opportunity to weaken and distract Morocco from its more serious problems, including the problem of liberating the occupied fortresses of Sebta and Melilla. The Dey of Algeria contributed to Morocco's inability to recover its occupied territories even though he supported the Moroccans and sent them assistance against the Spanish occupation.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله على توفيقه وتأييده في كل شأن

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
الحمد لله على توفيقه وتأييده في كل شأن



الحمد لله على توفيقه وتأييده في كل شأن  
الحمد لله على توفيقه وتأييده في كل شأن

This is a dhahīr which was decreed by the Prince of the Faithful, Mawlāy Ismā'il Ibn ash-Sharīf appointing 'Abd-Allāh Ibn 'Aisha as the minister of foreign affairs.



#### **Relations with the Sublime Porte.**

The Sublime Porte was unhappy with Algeria's indifferent behaviour towards its western neighbour, but no effective punitive measures were taken to end the Algerian policy vis-à-vis Morocco, because the reports which were sent by the Ottoman ambassadors and Ottoman governors in Algeria did not reflect an alarming situation. All this caused the Moroccan diplomats to deal with the Ottoman rulers in the most careful manner.

#### **Relations with Britain.**

Moroccan diplomatic efforts to convince Britain to leave Tangier culminated successfully. A Moroccan mission headed by ambassador Muhammad Ben Haddū was in effect sent to London and achieved this purpose diplomatically, without having to resort to other means. Consequently, Tangier was reunited with Morocco which led to new relations between Morocco and England based on mutual understanding and cooperation. This also led to numerous Moroccan missions being sent to the English court and a number of English ambassadors being sent to the Moroccan capitals where the Moroccan princes actively participated in diplomatic activities. England's conquest of Gibraltar was carried out with Morocco's assistance which led the latter to ask for England's help in trying to recover Sebta. When Napoleon appeared on the French scene, the Moroccans increased their diplomatic efforts with the objective of liberating Sebta.

#### **Relations with Holland.**

Following the path of the Sa'diyyūn, the 'Alawiyūn continued their good relations with the Dutch which are referred to as *Jins al-Flāmank* in the Moroccan Arabic documents. Numerous treaties were signed between Morocco and Holland and numerous missions were exchanged between the two countries. Letters were exchanged at various levels and a Moroccan mission was sent by Mawlāy Ismā'īl in 1686 to attend the celebrations of the Prince of Orange's birthday.

#### **Relations with the Holy See and the Mediterranean Republics.**

Morocco's relations progressed with the Mediterranean republics as is reflected in the great number of treaties between the Kingdom of Morocco and Sicily. Furthermore, the Moroccan ambassadors to the Mediterranean kingdoms have written their diaries describing their travels and missions. Furthermore, Morocco had close relations with Sardinia, Venice, Tuscany, Leghorn and Genoa



Morocco's relations with these republics were as intense as its relations with Italy after its unification. The 'Alawiyyūn rulers also had relations with Malta, Corsica, and the Greek Islands, not to mention Morocco's relations with the Pope.

#### **Relations with the United States of America.**

Morocco witnessed the birth of the United States of America and was among the first nations in the world to recognise its independence in a declaration issued by the Sultan on the 20<sup>th</sup> of december 1777, two months before the Franco-American treaty. Numerous treaties were signed and even more letters were exchanged between the two nations since the period of Sultan Muhammad III and President George Washington. There were times when relations between the two countries deteriorated almost to the point of war when Morocco supported its Libyan friends at Tripoli and confronted the American landing in Libya.

However, Morocco supported the United States in its civil war President Ulysses Simpson Grant also sent for Sultan Muhammad IV's assistance against European ambitions in America.

Sultan Hassan I<sup>st</sup> was prevented from sending a Moroccan ambassador to Washington as he had promised, by his occupation with the numerous internal rebellions. Yet the difficult situation which Morocco experienced during the period of the French protectorate enabled Morocco to create new ties with the United States at the highest level as is illustrated in the meeting between King Muhammad V and President Roosevelt in Casablanca early in 1943.

#### **Relations with Central and South America.**

Morocco's external relations were extended to include the Central American countries. Moroccan archives reflect the echo of relations with these nations including Mexico, Guatemala and Cuba, while other documents are related to Moroccan relations with the South American nations such as Venezuela, Brazil and Argentina.

#### **Relations with Russia.**

Russia's enormous distance from Morocco did not prevent Moroccan diplomats from creating close ties with Tsarist Russia. In reality, Morocco's important strategic position attracted the interest of the Russians, and this interest was strengthened by the fact that the Ottoman Empire which shared a common religion with Morocco was Russia's neighbour. Letters exchanged



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَاقُولِ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ  
 بِعَبْدِ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ لَكَ تَامِيحٌ



إلى عظيم الحكام ومن أفاضل الناس الرئيس الشريف السلطان وعلم من أفاضل القدر ما بعد  
 الله وصلواتنا بكتبكم وصلواتنا شروحك الصلح إلى وجهكم النبل ونحو  
 منعكم على المسامحة والصلح التامير وما نحن بحسبنا بما خلت من التوسر  
 وكهر المسروك كل ما خلت من التامير ما يفرض أن مثله الله والسلطان وكاتب  
 بـ مشيخي الفقراء على أفضى ما بيننا وبينهم والله

1202

Moroccan diplomacy has always worked to achieve world peace. This document is one of the numerous examples illustrating this point and it consists of the Moroccan Sultan Muhammad III's reply to the first American president, George Washington, who had asked Morocco to play the role of arbitrator in the conflict between the United States on the one hand and the provinces of Tunis and Tripoli on the other. This letter was dated on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Dhū-l-Qi'da 1202 A.H./17<sup>th</sup> August 1788 A.D.



between the Russian Tzar and the Moroccan Sultan Muhammad III are still to be found in the archives of Saint Petersburg. Moroccan ministers also exchanged letters with Russian ministers. Furthermore, Morocco adopted a firm position concerning the presence of the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean Sea when it was asked to do so by the Sublime Porte.

Morocco was prevented from continuing its cooperation with the East European nations by the persistent conflict between the Ottomans and the Russians. Yet in spite of this obstacle, Morocco welcomed one of the Moscovite princes during the end of the nineteenth century and the court of Nicholas II in Saint Petersburg received an important Moroccan diplomatic mission during the early twentieth century.

Despite the enormous number of documents concerning relations between Morocco and the Russians which are presently available in the archives of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the « Hermitage » Museum at Leningrad, the documents which were preserved in the legation at Tangier were more numerous. These important documents were lost when the Russian representative in Tangier was dismissed following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

#### **Relations with the Scandinavian Countries.**

Relations with the Scandinavian countries during the period of the 'Alawiyyūn were close as is illustrated by the intense correspondence, the numerous missions and the treaties, particularly during the European wars between England and France. The list of the plenipotentiary envoys and of the consuls and diplomatic counsellors include a large number of eminent personalities from such countries as Morocco, Denmark and Sweden.

#### **Relations with Austria.**

Moroccan relations with Austria which the Moroccan documents referred to as *ambiryāl* were equally intense. This is clearly reflected in the Moroccan archives which include large numbers of letters, missions and treaties between the two countries. In Vienna, there is an extraordinary painting of a Moroccan diplomatic mission making its way through the streets of the Austrian capital towards the Imperial Palace of Joseph II.

Moroccan relations with Austria were influenced and determined, as they were with Russia, by its spiritual ties with the Ottoman Empire. As a result, there was a naval clash between part of the Moroccan and Austrian fleets which coincided with the French presence in Algeria and the pressure which the French exercised on Morocco from Algeria. This incident was followed by the Moroccan diplomats' acceptance of conditions which paralysed the activities of the Moroccan fleet and ended its renowned naval supremacy.

الحمد لله

ولا حول ولا قوة الا بالله



إلى الكندي، الشريف وزير عم خيمنة الموشكوس  
الملاح على مراتج العدي اما بعد وفد وجمعنا لعلكم  
كتاب معاهدة نيتنا بجنسكم برأو بخر او حيشي قد علم بلادنا  
السعيدة، بادشوركم نكمل معه الصلح بشروطه ارسل الله  
وكتب في 20 جمادى الثانية عام 1192

*This letter was sent by the Prince of the Faithful Sidi Muhammad Ben Abd Allāh to the minister of Tsarina Catherine the Great on the 20<sup>th</sup> of Jumāda II, 1192 A.H/16<sup>th</sup> July 1779 concerning the truce between Morocco and Russia.*

### **Relations with Hamburg.**

It is important to observe in the context of Moroccan-Austrian relations, that Morocco maintained close ties with a number of other powers including Hamburg, Bremen, Lubeck and Prussia. There are also traces of Moroccan relations with Czechoslovakia and Poland. Numerous letters and missions exchanged between Morocco and the Republic of Dubrovnik (Yugoslavia) which the Moroccans referred to as *Rākūza*. Morocco's close relations with those republics attracted the interest of all the European kingdoms which followed their development closely, particularly at the naval level.

### **Relations with Belgium.**

Just as the Moroccans had done with the United States and Holland, they supported the Kingdom of Belgium upon its independence from Holland. This support is clearly reflected in the letters, missions and treaties between the two countries following Belgium's independence. There are also many original copies of treaties and the names of ambassadors and Moroccan students who pursued their education in Belgium, which reflect the close ties between the two kingdoms.

### **Relations with the Mashriq.**

Relations between Morocco and the Mashriq during the period of the 'Alawiyyūn included the following regions: Hijāz, Yemen, Iraq and Egypt. Morocco's relations with the Middle East included an extensive area and were particularly important with Constantinople which was one of the greatest cities in the world, and the central capital of other Ottoman provinces. We have numerous documents which indicate the exact character of these relations reflecting a Moroccan state that was always up to its responsibilities, always able to confront difficult situations with success in the diplomatic field. Morocco's relations with the Middle Eastern regions were so close that intermarriage was common between the Moroccan sultans and the kings in the Mashriq, thus bringing the two extremes of the Arab world closer together. Morocco often had to go through great risks and to make big sacrifices for the sake of its neighbours, as is illustrated in its unconditional support of the Algerian Ottoman province against Spanish invasions. Morocco also threatened France with its direct intervention when the French attacked Sousse and Tunis. Morocco further threatened to declare war against the United States of America if Tripoli were not liberated. Finally, the Moroccans continued to support the *Ashrāf* (pl. of *Sharīf*) of Mecca and Medina at the price of annoying the Sublime Porte.

### Relations with the African Kingdoms.

Morocco's relations with the African kingdoms, particularly those in West Africa, continued to be as close during the period of the 'Alawiyyūn as they had previously been during the period of the Sa'diyyūn. This explains the royal visits of Moroccan sultans to the African kingdoms and the visits of the African kings to Morocco on such occasions as the celebration of the king's coronation or the celebration of the yearly allegiance or *bay'a* by the representatives of different parts of the kingdom. Morocco's close relations with the African kingdoms on the banks of the Senegal River are reflected in the intermarriage between the Moroccan rulers and the African rulers. This further explains the adoption by the Moroccan kings of the title « King of Morocco and the Sudan » and the fact that the Friday sermons were read in the Moroccan sultan's name in those areas up to the twentieth century as is evident in both the Moroccan and European documents. It is also interesting to note that the Moroccan archives contain letters exchanged between the consul general of the Republic of Liberia in London and the sultan's representative (*nā'ib*) in Tangier following Liberia's independence.

It is evident from a close examination of these relations that Morocco had always maintained contact with the movements in southern Morocco and the Sahara which has always been organically united with other parts of Morocco. Throughout the ages, Morocco has always considered that its sovereignty is incomplete and meaningless without its authority over the Sahara. Consequently, Morocco's foreign policy towards the neighbouring African kingdoms in the south was characterised by wisdom, a strong determination and a continuous readiness to respond to new developments. This also explains why the Moroccans have considered Morocco to include not only Fez, Marrakesh, its fortresses, and its mountains, but also the Sahara. We find the following statement in letters addressed to the Moroccan kings: « the frontiers of your nation begin with the Sudan ».

### Relations with Portugal.

Despite the collapse of the Portuguese Empire during the period of the Sa'diyyūn with the unfortunate death of Don Sebastian during the Battle of Wādī-l-Makhāzin, Portugal continued to occupy the city of Anfa (Casablanca) and Mazagan (El-Jadida). Moroccan-Portuguese relations witnessed a new age following this battle as is reflected in the exchange of missions and letters and the establishment of a consulate in Morocco, until these cities were liberated.



### Relations with Spain.

Moroccan-Spanish relations were intense and dealing with Spain constituted a real challenge for Moroccan diplomacy because of the gravity of the problems which Spain presented. These common problems constituted an enormous obstacle to the development of peaceful collaboration and cooperation between the two neighbouring countries. Morocco, for example, was fully occupied with the problem of the occupation of its fortresses by Spain and having tried all kinds of diplomatic methods without success, it was forced to confront Spain militarily, thus liberating the city of *al-Ma'mūra* which was rebaptised Mehdiyya. Morocco was also able to liberate the city of Larache in northern Morocco where its inhabitants replaced the black leather shoes they wore during the period of occupation with colourful shoes to celebrate the liberation of their city. Asila too was liberated and its mosques which had been transformed into churches were again transformed into mosques. Algeciras, Melilla, Bādis and Makour were besieged by the Moroccans for a long time. Furthermore, the Moroccans applied all kinds of pressures on the European nations, including Britain and France, in order to support its new strategy. Dozens of treaties were signed and dozens of missions and hundreds of letters were exchanged between Morocco and the European countries, but although the Moroccans very nearly achieved their objectives, they failed in the end.

The French landing in Algeria was to the advantage of the Spanish colonialist and the possibility of confrontation with France was only avoided by Morocco's experienced diplomats who were able to successfully face these new developments which led the allied forces to surround Morocco thus isolating it completely.

### Relations with France.

During the early period, Franco-Moroccan relations were friendly, but there were also periods of crisis. Every one of the 'Alawiyyūn rulers marked Morocco's bi-lateral relations in his own particular manner. The correspondence and the missions exchanged between the two countries shed much light on their real character. For example, it is clear from these documents that some of the Moroccan kings were more flexible, open-minded and courageous than their European counterparts. The themes which were discussed by Mawlāy Ismā'īl in his letters to Louis XIV are truly extraordinary<sup>(4)</sup>

(4) D. Lefebvre and M.I. Archance, *Une idylle manquée à la cour du Roi soleil*, La Presse médicale, 14 Janvier 1984, pp. 6-8.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

*This is a letter from the Prince of the Faithful Mawlāy Ismā'il to the Spanish sovereign Don Carlos dated on the 16<sup>th</sup> of Dhū-l-Hija 1101 A.D./ 20<sup>th</sup> of September 1690 A.D. It was carried to the Spaniards by Ambassdor Muhammad Ibn 'Abd-Allāh 'Abd-as-Salām Guessous. Following his discussion of what occurred to the inhabitants of Granada when the Spanish ruler broke the agreement he had made with the Moroccan sultan concerning Granada, the Moroccan sultan discussed the question of Arabic manuscripts in Algeria and asked the Spanish ruler for five thousand manuscripts to be sent to Morocco.*





The reign of Muhammad III was characterised by a great diplomatic activity which left a strong echo in both Europe and America. During this period, Morocco signed treaties with numerous countries including the following: Denmark in 1753-54, Italy in 1760, Sweden in 1763, Venice in 1765, Spain in 1767, France in 1767, Portugal in 1773, Holland in 1777, Tuscany in 1778, Sicily in 1782, Austria in 1783, the United States of America in 1786, Hamburg in 1802, Sardinia in 1825 and Belgium in 1862.

Moroccan-French relations continued to prosper until Napoleon appeared on the scene and the Moroccans were informed of his activities in Egypt by the Sublime Porte. Morocco was greatly affected by the French occupation of Algeria in 1830 as is reflected in the royal letters, and it was fully aware of the drastic consequences of this occupation. In effect, it led to a series of grave problems, particularly because the Moroccan coast became the object of attacks in revenge of the Moroccan assistance to the Algerians. This confrontation and constant state of conflict lasted over a period of eighty years. During this difficult period, many nations refused to offer the Moroccans any assistance while others sought to occupy Moroccan territories. France penetrated into Morocco's eastern frontiers, Spain landed in the « Zafarin » Islands, and England established itself in southern Morocco.

Belgium tried to put a foot in the Atlantic coast, while the United States threatened to besiege Moroccan fortresses. Consequently, Morocco found itself confronted by an alliance of nations on the eve of the present century, with each country trying to obtain the greatest privileges in the Kingdom of Morocco. Moroccan diplomacy was confronted by a number of choices. It had to choose between certain nations with which to form an alliance or which would offer it their assistance. Moroccan diplomacy was really presented with one of two choices: it either had to engage in suicidal adventures or accept the unfortunate course of developments and to sign treaties of alliance with European nations. Morocco was consequently obliged to accept international compromise, particularly after France had paved the way by neutralising all those who opposed it in its Moroccan policy. Yet the Treaty of the Protectorate in 1912 was followed by a staunch Moroccan resistance and bloody events accompanied by popular explosions of protest in the north and the south, which included members of the different social strata of Moroccan society.

#### **The French Protectorate and Moroccan Resistance.**

Despite the fact that the treaty of the protectorate prevented Morocco from all diplomatic activity in the sixth and seventh articles, the latter pursued its diplomatic activities which date back to a period of over two hundred years. The Moroccan sovereign continued, despite the circumstances, to impose his views





خزينا الاخر الحاج محمد بن العتيبي في انظر ليس فيك الله وطل الله عليك ورحمت الله ويعر واصل  
جوابك ويحييه في اجابك به بلاسرورامبا فيا غر فقه مركب جنسه لم يسمي سمع الله  
من عجب من قريشهم للمي نبي المنكر وكما كتبه لرويت بزلط ومرت دولته تحفظه ما كان  
كتب به بعض الناس في عهد الباسرور قبله من ان يخرج من عبيتهم من استواحل الشوسيت  
لنبي ووقع له واجاله جورك يكون على نفسه وذكرنا الله فيا فقه بزلط وزعيم الامور  
التي انية بزلطهم كان كلبا من جانبنا الغاية بالله بواسطه الخرم عذرنا فيا بيلان  
هزاو كما منك الاياله من الجهد الشوسيت ملامى واي ذرعت او فنتها ما عدا اخر لتعلم ذاله  
دولته وتقبله قبل الغني وكون الباعث لهم على ذاله كوفهم لهم الارض المسماة بالعميه  
بواك الزعب وبالعجميه بزارا واليكونوا على ابل في الاحتياك مودول احبب في العراو تين  
وصا وبالبال جفر كتب في ذاله الايام بالسؤال عن عرو الاياله من الجهد المذكورة فاحبب  
بما حاله من ان عرو ما حيث الكي في المستقل ومنوصي من ناحية والسوق من ناحية  
ومغنية من ناحية وفتحة من الجواب في فتحة تطلع كيمه لتكون على ابل من ذاله واقفا  
واك الزعب جفر كتب في ذاله من الفاحية فاحبب وان من المجلد بناحية اولاد وليم  
رفيلة تسمى بالعم وبيير الزين من جفر خطا التسمي في ذاله النازلير بنواحي من الكسوف في التسمي  
عنهم بالزاخله باعلم الباسرور بزلطه والسلام في رمضان عام ١٣٠٣ هـ

Spain occupied Dakhla in December 1884 and the Moroccans attacked the Spaniards the following year. As a result, Spain protested to the Sultan Mawlāy al-Hassan I. This letter was the Moroccan Sultan's reply dated on the 4<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan 1303 A.H/6<sup>th</sup> of July 1886 A.D. The Sultan confirmed that Rio de Oro belonged to Morocco and that Moroccan sovereignty extended over this territory and its inhabitants. This confirmation illustrates the existence of Morocco's natural frontiers during this period despite the usurpation of Moroccan territory by the Spanish colonialists.

concerning the existence of consuls in Morocco and he also continued his contact with the external world. The historical meeting between His Majesty King Muhammad V, President Roosevelt, and Prime Minister Winston Churchill, is particularly significant. The Moroccan sovereign insisted on the presence of Crown Prince Mawlāy Hassan during this meeting despite his young age and this gave the prince an opportunity to see his father expose his views concerning Morocco's future liberation. This important event was followed by the famous petition which the nationalists presented on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 1944 with the Sultan's secret consent and which was signed by fifty five personalities.

This was followed by Sultan Muhammad V's historical visit to Tangier where he openly declared Morocco's demands which led to a new phase in the struggle against French colonialism characterised by the unity of the King, the nationalists and the masses.

The French colonialists were particularly aware of the fact that His Majesty King Muhammad V considered his son, the Crown Prince Mawlāy Hassan, as his companion and counsellor during these difficult confrontations, and this contributed to increase their enmity towards him at a time when his popularity reached its peak in Morocco. It was during this period that the Arab Maghrib Bureau was established in Cairo with the purpose of defending the Moroccan cause against the French and Spanish. These Bureaus and offices played the role of embassies, not only because they defended the Moroccan cause in their press conferences, newspaper articles and publications, but because they had direct contact with the official political authorities of the countries where they resided and with the diplomatic corps in those countries.

Moroccan nationalists presented the Moroccan problem in the international conference of Bandung, at the United Nations where many friendly nations defended the Moroccan cause, in Paris and in New York.

#### **Muhammad V and Morocco's Recovery of its Sovereignty and Independence.**

Instead of granting Morocco its legitimate rights, the colonialists chose to send His Majesty Muhammad V and members of his family to exile in Corsica on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 1953 and then to Madagascar. This immediately led to the explosion of armed resistance against French colonialism not only in the mountains, reaching such a dangerous level that the French were forced to bring the militant King back to his country.

### **Morocco during the Post Independence Period.**

Following a short stay at Saint Germain-en-Laye and upon the declaration of Saint Cloud on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 1955 stating that negotiations would be held with France with the object of acquiring Moroccan independence, Muhammad V returned with his family to Morocco on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1955. Two days later, he issued his famous declaration concerning « the end of the stone age and of the Protectorate and the beginning of independence and freedom ».

The independence treaty was signed in Paris by France on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1956 and by the Spaniards in Madrid shortly after. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1957, the Moroccan sovereign stated the following in his famous speech in Tetuan :

Moroccan sovereignty is an indivisible whole. Its fruits can only be reaped with the completion of the territorial unity of our nation under the guidance of the crown which unites all our country. This is the objective for the realisation of which we have sacrificed so much. The legislation power is now in our hands in its totality and the law is respected in northern and southern Morocco.

The declaration concerning the independence of the international zone of Tangier was signed on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October of the same year. Thus, following almost half a century of struggle and combat, Morocco recovered its independence and the Kingdom of Morocco occupied its normal place among other nations when the General Assembly unanimously voted for Morocco's membership in the United Nations on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 1956.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1957, His Majesty Muhammad V gave a speech at the United Nations headquarters after having freed his country of the heavy burden of colonialism and after having linked Morocco's present to its prestigious past :

Ever since our General Assembly was first created, our people have always welcomed all your decisions and resolutions with great pleasure and hope. We are today happy to participate in your activities and to contribute with our share in creating a better and happier world.



*His Majesty King Muhammad V on his way to exile on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 1953 after he refused to collaborate with the French colonial administration. His Majesty was accompanied by Crown Prince Mawlāy Hassan and Prince Mawlāy 'Abd Allāh. This event marked the beginning of the end of French colonialism in Morocco*



### **Morocco during the Post Independence Period.**

The king and the people's revolution for the liberation of Morocco became an example that other colonised nations followed in different parts of the world, particularly in Africa and Asia where armed resistance sprang up in many places. It is important to know that following his return from exile, His Majesty Muhammad V gave a speech at the New York United Nations headquarters where he did not hesitate to draw the attention of the world community of nations to these territories, including Algeria, which were still struggling for their freedom. His Majesty also demanded the right of all peoples to their self determination.

Morocco had become a member of the United Nations and has ever since participated positively in every occasion within every branch of the United Nations in the interest of the international community.

The Arab League was among the earliest organisations of which Morocco became a member following its independence. Prior to independence, Morocco was represented in the Arab League by a delegation from the Spanish zone.

Morocco has consequently always been present in the Arab meetings, particularly the Arab summit meetings in which it participated with brilliance. When the question of Palestine presented itself Morocco concentrated all its efforts and its means in order to maintain Arab unity. It was also in the context of unity that Morocco expressed its total support for the idea which gave the militant leaders great hope, namely the unity of the Arab Maghrib. Consequently, Morocco has concentrated all its efforts to the support of any cause that would promote unity no matter how great the sacrifices that were required.

On the level of the non-aligned nations, Morocco has always been present since the very beginning and His Majesty Hassan II's contribution to the Non-Aligned Conference of Belgrade in September 1961 is a clear illustration of his firm belief in the principles of justice, freedom and non-alignment. Morocco has always played an important role in this conference.

On the African level, Morocco has always felt that it is firmly linked to this continent of which it forms a geographical part. His Majesty Muhammad V invited the African states to participate in the Summit Meeting of Casablanca in 1961. Morocco's support for Africa has always been unconditional since it became a founding member of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963. Morocco has continuously shared Africa's problems profoundly. A quick examination of Morocco's relations with the African countries will illustrate this point. These warm relations are reflected in the numerous treaties and high level visits between Morocco and its African friends. Morocco has always defended the ideal of a free and independent Africa because the African continent has an important role to play in the future at the international level. When His Majesty Hassan II proposed an Islamic Conference on Rajab 1389 A.H/September 1969 following the Israeli burning of the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, the acceptance of the



*His Majesty Muhammad V. returned from exile on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1955 and the French, Spanish and international zones were liberated. The above picture shows him presenting the news of this independence to the international community of nations on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 1957 when he stated,  
« Morocco is today happy to participate in your activities »*

Islamic states to participate in it was both spontaneous and unanimous, which reflects the international prestige enjoyed by Moroccan diplomacy and its international credibility. It is widely known that this Conference led to the creation of international organisations such as the Al-Qods Committee. Morocco had become the spokesman of the Islamic and Arab nations at the United Nations and in Christendom generally.

This is the picture that one forms of Morocco's external relations at the international level, but this picture becomes clearer when we examine them at the bi-lateral level. For example, Morocco's relations with Europe have always been intense, and they clearly reflect Morocco's contribution in building tomorrow's world, because Morocco has enjoyed historical ties and continues to enjoy friendly relations at present with almost every European nation.

Morocco has also manifested its presence strongly in Asia where it has always been informed of the general developments in the world's largest continent. Morocco has shared Asia's problems and adopted firm positions in line with its diplomatic traditions. Consequently, the Asian leaders have always been fully aware of Morocco's positions and they have often sought its assistance, support or counsel. These close relations are also reflected in the dozens of treaties and agreements between Morocco and the Asian countries.

In the American continent, the historical relations between Morocco and the Central and South American countries have continued. Visits are frequently exchanged between United States and Moroccan officials and summit meetings between the Moroccan King and the President of the United States occur regularly. Morocco's relations with the United States constitute an example other nations should follow.

Moreover, since after it gained its independence Morocco has tried to complete its territorial unity which consisted in liberating the Spanish and international zones, not forgetting four other regions where Moroccan sovereignty has always been acknowledged, in the east, north and south as expressed by His Majesty Hassan II in the speech he gave on the first anniversary of his enthronement in 1962. Morocco has made a great step forward in the implementation of its territorial unity ; thus by liberating Tarfaya in 1958 and Ifni in 1969, Morocco was brought to submit the question of its Sahara Provinces before the United Nations in 1963 and 1966 after a long diplomatic campaign in the different capitals.

Later, this question was submitted before the International Court of Justice which acknowledged that there have always existed allegiance ties between Morocco and the Sahara Provinces ; His Majesty Hassan II thus decided the organisation of the Green March in which 360,000 volunteers took part in view of liberating the Saharan Provinces.



*His Majesty Hassan II representing Morocco in the Summit Meeting held at Nairobi on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 1981, accompanied by H.E. Prince Sidi Muhammad. His Majesty defended Morocco's legitimate rights over the Sahara provinces.*



Then negotiations were held in Marid which led to the signature of an agreement in November 1975 putting an end to the presence of Spain in the Saharan Provinces.

The Moroccans had thus decided to accomplish the unity of their country in spite of all kinds of obstacles and challenges which they encountered.

We must refer to the long list of alliances and bilateral agreements as it is necessary to mention the multilateral ones signed or approved by Morocco or else those Morocco agreed on ; concerning the first category there are more than eighty agreements among which those with Albania and Zaire. As to the second category, more than fifty agreements were signed with organisations or agencies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the International Postal Union.

The number of agreements signed with the different nations during the last thirty years following independence is far more important than those signed by Morocco during the last three centuries during which the 'Alawiyyün established their rule over Morocco. It should also be pointed out that the 'Alawiyyün rulers have been, on the diplomatic level, particularly efficient compared to the preceding dynasties in Morocco.

## CONCLUSION

We have seen that the international history of Morocco covers a long period of time, that it has known bitter and sweet phases, victories and defeats, that it has contributed to world history with capital events of its own creation, and constitutes part of a universal legacy. Moroccan history has benefitted from its ups as much as it has from its downs, and both its presence and its absence, its contributions and its receptions have been based on a profound reflection and serious thought. This factor explains its capacity to resist so many orientations over so many centuries and to have lasted for so long in times of war and peace alike and in so many contradictory situations. Moroccan history has therefore been marked by unique stamp of originality.

We have seen that ever since its creation, Morocco has defended its international existence jealously on the one hand, and has protected its personality on the other. We have also seen that when diplomatic relations between other nations were still at their embryonic stage during the Middle Ages, and while other nations adopted isolationist policies, Moroccan diplomatic missions were sent to different parts of the globe. Missions were sent northwards to Europe through the Mediterranean Sea, southwards to the Sudan across the Sahara to reach as far as the African kingdoms, and eastwards to the Arabian peninsula and beyond the Arabian peninsula, and westwards across the Atlantic Ocean to the American continent.

We have also seen that the Moroccan identity is in some ways unique, because of its extremely long history and profound heritage which were conditioned by its unique geographical situation, its particular characteristics, its principles and its agreements and positions across the ages.

As an African nation, Morocco has occupied a privileged position in northwest Africa and observers have sometimes compared it to an antenna, reflecting African concerns across the world.

Morocco's ties with the Mashriq have never ceased to exist, basically thanks to its Islamic character.

Morocco's Mediterranean coast and its closeness to the European continent explain the fact that it has contributed to the general development in the area while its Atlantic coast overlooks the American continent. Not only do two important bodies of water meet at the Strait of Gibraltar, but Morocco constitutes the crossroads where three continents meet as well as a meeting place for numerous cultures and civilisations.

The combination of the above mentioned factors have enabled Morocco to contribute positively to the development of international relations and to carry the heavy burden of important responsibilities given its privileged historical and geographical conditions. The following quotation clearly illustrates this observation, « Morocco has remained the Mecca of past and present nations which have sought its friendship as it has sought theirs and which have sought its assistance as it has sought theirs. » This explains Morocco's continuous need of being constantly on guard against any developments that might affect it from near or from far.

It is also this reality that explains the nature of the principles of foreign policy which were adopted by the Moroccan diplomats who have considered these principles to constitute an essential pillar for the promotion of cooperation between different peoples. Moroccan diplomacy has in effect always sought cooperation with other nations as is reflected for example in the numerous contacts between Moroccan diplomats and other nations either at the regional, bilateral or international levels. For example, there are records of Moroccan missions and correspondence with almost every part of the world. In effect, Morocco has for long enjoyed peaceful relations with its neighbours in the Mediterranean basin as well as with nations along the Atlantic coast. It has frequently contributed to prevent wars in areas that are close and others that are further away.

The conception that Moroccan diplomats have developed of the rights of one's neighbour, whoever this neighbour may happen to be, are that he deserves the fullest respect. Not only is a neighbour not an enemy, he is the dearest friend one can have. This approach explains why Moroccan diplomacy has always reserved a privileged treatment for its neighbours, a principle which the Moroccan diplomats have always implemented regularly.

Morocco's peaceful mutual relations with its neighbours was extended to its relations with African, Asian, American and European countries that are far off which have traditionally regarded Morocco favourably and appreciated the courage and patience of its diplomats. These peaceful relations are quite clear in the numerous international treaties which have been signed between the Kingdom of Morocco and countries from all parts of the world. This phenomenon is a healthy one which reflects a realistic understanding of international developments even during the most difficult circumstances with other nations in such distant areas as the Indian sub-continent or the American continent.

Moroccan diplomacy has been most active in its struggle against under-development and for the promotion of development in numerous fields. This has constituted one of the pillars of Moroccan foreign policy as may be seen from

examples from the period of the Murabitūn or the Muwahhidūn as well as after them when Morocco progressed industrially, and economically, while preserving its oldest traditions and cultural identity.

Neutrality and non-alignment have also constituted a permanent principle of Moroccan diplomacy for the promotion of international peace, cooperation and understanding between different peoples. Moroccans have never understood non-alignment to mean isolation and indifference towards world developments, but rather, a keen interest in the search for the truth and adopting positions that would serve to promote values of humanism. For the Moroccans, the principle of non-alignment has always represented an effort to promote peace and understanding among different nations. This explains how Moroccan foreign policy has always respected the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations.

Moroccans have always opposed oppression and racism. Morocco has often adopted respectable positions in favour of the weak and the oppressed in their liberation struggles against injustice. It is no secret that several peoples have gained their independence thanks to Moroccan assistance. The real purpose why Morocco has assisted these peoples is uniquely in order to promote their happiness and human dignity. Examples of Morocco's positions in this respect include its diplomatic campaigns against slavery and oppression in Europe and America with the sole purpose of ending man's enslavement by man and to promote total equality between human beings regardless of the colour of their skin or their religious differences. The basic stimulating force behind Moroccan diplomacy in its efforts to promote these egalitarian principles has been Islam which has always prohibited oppression and encouraged recourse to peaceful methods as a means of solving problems.

Moroccan diplomats have also adopted respectable positions regarding issues of arms limitation. Moroccan diplomats have often intervened verbally by presenting advice or threats in order to prevent the further development or deployment of arms with the goal of encouraging the implementation of justice and security among citizens and nations. It is not surprising that most of the treaties signed by Morocco have stressed the necessity to limit the use of arms. Morocco has continuously opposed any country that has threatened the application of this principle. Morocco has further always strived to encourage the promotion of higher standards of living of the underprivileged citizens and the documents demonstrate quite clearly that Moroccans have always believed most strongly in the defense of human dignity and human rights.

It would be futile to repeat the long experience of the Moroccan school of diplomacy in this field over the ages which reflects its methods and principles most clearly, but I would nonetheless like to stress the importance of little details



which may appear superficial on the surface while helping us form a clearer image of the general outline of the establishment and development of the Moroccan diplomatic school.

This diplomatic tradition has always been characterised by its democratic dimension, because Moroccan leaders have never adopted any serious decisions in the context of their relations with other nations before holding consultations with the scholars and intellectuals particularly when great issues were involved such as declarations of war or frontier issues.

However, it is perhaps humanism more than anything else that has marked the Moroccan school of diplomacy as is illustrated by Morocco's continuous willingness to assist other countries that were plagued, or ships that accidentally entered regional waters and found themselves in trouble during bad weather. Moroccan diplomats have always expressed their views extremely frankly concerning individuals who were nominated to carry out negotiations with the representatives of other nations, and consequently expected other nations to send honest and reliable representatives to Morocco.

Moroccan diplomacy has fundamentally been nationalist, constantly keeping in mind the nation's interests and those of its inhabitants. This feature stands out at two levels. The first is a strong determination to defend Morocco's territorial integrity and its nationals living abroad. There are dozens of illustrative examples of how Moroccan diplomats have succeeded in imposing a respectable image of their country abroad. The second feature is the fervent determination to defend the Moroccan heritage. This explains why Moroccan diplomats have followed the course traced by their ancestors and defended their cultural heritage and their religion. Moroccans have never ceased to struggle for the liberation of their occupied territories through a variety of methods. This objective has been so important to the Moroccans that thousands have not hesitated to can diplomatic tradition.

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